THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Presidential Search
Profile Document

THE GRADUATE CENTER
CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
THE SEARCH

The Graduate Center, part of The City University of New York (CUNY), seeks a creative, visionary and collaborative leader to serve as its next President. This is an exciting opportunity to lead a public facing institution that is uniquely committed to graduate education and advanced research.

Established in 1961, the Graduate Center has for nearly six decades served as the doctoral degree-granting institution in the largest urban university system in the United States. Located in the heart of Manhattan, the Graduate Center is widely recognized for its highly ranked programs, world-class faculty, innovative research, affordability, and devotion to the public good. Approximately 3,600 students from around the world study at the Graduate Center, pursuing doctoral and master's degrees in more than 40 programs.

The new President will join the Graduate Center at a moment of tremendous possibility. The incoming President will have the opportunity to shape the scope of public graduate education in profound, life-changing ways. Moreover, given the Graduate Center’s central position within the CUNY system, an imaginative President has the potential to combine its constitutive parts into a truly compelling and cohesive project that will leave an indelible mark on the entire system for generations to come.

The Graduate Center will require a leader who embraces the institution’s unique mission, can communicate effectively with a wide variety of constituents, and believes in the transformative power of public facing, high impact research and scholarship. Reporting to the Chancellor of the CUNY system, the President will work tirelessly to set the strategic course for the institution’s future, prioritizing student success, financial stability, and academic innovation while establishing highly productive internal and external relationships at the Graduate Center, across the CUNY system, and beyond.

Isaacson, Miller has been retained to assist in this recruitment. All inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.
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With an operating budget of $3.5B, CUNY serves over 270,000 students in credit-bearing programs, and 268,000 adult and continuing education (non-credit) course enrollments. It conferred approximately 53,942 degrees in 2017-2018 and since 1969, has conferred over 1.3 million degrees. The University is comprised of eleven senior colleges, seven community colleges, five graduate and professional schools, and an honors college, spread across the five boroughs of New York City; it is served by 7,300 tenure track faculty and 11,500 non-tenure track or adjunct faculty and over 25,000 staff. Its total degree-credit enrollment grows at an average rate of 2.5 percent per year in approximately 1,400 academic programs.

CUNY has evolved a remarkable mission that is true to its founding heritage, its history as an academically distinguished university, and its profound commitment to open its doors to every New Yorker. It is a unique form of a public urban university, combining the best principles of academic rigor and excellence with a fundamental commitment to maximizing opportunity, particularly for those from low-income, underrepresented groups and immigrant communities. For 170 years, it has lifted generations of families and educated millions of people. A 2017 study, conducted by Stanford University economist Raj Chetty, showed that CUNY propels almost six times as many low-income students into the middle class and beyond as all eight Ivy League colleges–plus Duke, M.I.T., Stanford, and the University of Chicago combined. True to its promise, students graduate CUNY with little or no debt. The New York State governor’s commitment to equal access enables 70 percent of CUNY students to attend the university tuition-free. The economic promise of CUNY is singular and made to a remarkably diverse student population, unrivaled by any other institution of its size in the country. There simply is no majority group: Black students account for 25 percent of the student body, Hispanic students 30 percent, Asians 20 percent, and whites 24 percent. The student body hails from 211 territories and countries and collectively speaks 174 languages. Forty percent of students speak a native language other than English, 45 percent are first-generation college students, and 58 percent are Pell grant recipients.

At the heart of New York is CUNY. Its efforts are woven into every part of the City’s economy and the very life of both New York City and New York State. CUNY colleges serve 58 percent of undergraduate students in New York City and nearly half (46 percent) of all students attending a New York City college (fall 2013 enrollment figures). The university accounts for more than a third of the business and finance degrees awarded by New York City institutions, about one-third of the city’s public school teachers, and a high percentage of the nurses and health and science technicians employed by local medical facilities. Eighty percent of CUNY graduates were still in the New York City metropolitan region 10 years after graduation. Today, New York ranks third among the ten largest US cities, behind San Jose and Philadelphia, in the percentage of its college-age population who attend college.

CUNY has benefited greatly from funding support from the State and the City of New York. State and City contributions comprise 65 percent of its $3.5B operating budget, with the remainder derived from research grants and philanthropic revenue sources as well as tuition dollars. Only a handful of public universities anywhere enjoy such support. Governor Andrew Cuomo’s Excelsior, free-tuition program, announced in 2017, is an impressive declaration of New York State’s commitment to public higher education. The graduates of CUNY have the opportunity to emerge in a world-class economy, with the skills learned in great research universities, at an entirely affordable tuition, and with the strong support of the public and elected officials.
THE GRADUATE CENTER

The Graduate Center grew out of CUNY’s Graduate Division, which came into existence on September 1, 1961 under the leadership of its founding dean of graduate studies, Mina Rees. In these early years, Rees looked to the English university system for inspiration and found in it the idea of a consortium. As she envisioned it, “the key was to find that delicate balance which would draw upon the best resources of the university, avoid duplication of effort, and enhance the undergraduate programs at the colleges, but, at the same time, would provide for a rational doctoral program.” This early idea put forth by Rees, at a time when there were only four colleges in the system, has guided the Graduate Center for well over a half century amid rapid growth and expansion.

Today, the Graduate Center (GC), formally The Graduate School and University Center of The City University of New York, is a leader in public graduate education, devoted to enhancing the public good through pioneering research, serious learning, and reasoned debate. The Graduate Center offers ambitious students more than 40 doctoral and master’s programs of the highest caliber, taught by top faculty drawn from GC headquarters midtown as well as the major campuses of the five boroughs. CUNY benefits from this diverse body of students who, in turn, teach hundreds of thousands of undergraduates every year. As a function of its reputation, size, and research, the Graduate Center is an institution with national and international influence, one of a select group of ‘R-1’ research universities (the highest of the Carnegie classifications) that shoulder the responsibility of educating the next generation of scholars and researchers, and carrying out fundamental and applied research of national significance. Its nearly 40 centers, institutes, and initiatives, including the Advanced Science Research Center (ASRC), bring together scholars and researchers across disciplinary boundaries. In addition, the University Center serves as the administrative home to The Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism, The CUNY Baccalaureate for Unique and Interdisciplinary Studies, The School of Labor and Urban Studies, The CUNY Graduate School of Public Health & Health Policy, The CUNY School of Professional Studies, and Macaulay Honors College.
By virtue of the teaching consortium that underpins the doctoral program, as well as the teaching assignments across CUNY that students fulfill as part of their doctoral training, no CUNY campus is more integrated into the system of colleges than the Graduate Center. In fact, the doctoral consortium, which offers a highly efficient system of advanced teaching and supervision that draws upon CUNY’s scale and diversity, is arguably the single most powerful and successful academic feature of the university, bringing into focus at the Graduate Center the extraordinary range and depth of expertise possessed by campus faculty, who carry out about 70 percent of doctoral teaching and supervision.

Total full-time faculty is 134, over 90 percent of whom hold a doctorate or University equivalent. The Graduate Center has 59 adjunct faculty members, and a staff of approximately 2,100, including 1,153 graduate assistants. A total of 3,543 students were enrolled in Fall 2018 - 3,012 in doctoral programs and 531 at the master's level. In addition to the Graduate Center faculty, students at the Graduate Center have direct access to approximately 1,700 consortial faculty members from the CUNY campuses and affiliated institutions. These consortial faculty teach classes at the GC, serve as readers, advisors, and dissertation committee members, greatly enhancing the academic offerings for students at the Graduate Center.

As one of CUNY’s 25 colleges and units, the Graduate Center receives an annual allocation from CUNY’s Central Office, which regulate a wide variety of financial, personnel, and information technology functions. The Central Office governs human resources, procurement, capital allocation, and new program authorization but the campuses have considerable local autonomy to manage their own budgets and to build improved revenue within approved program offerings. CUNY is both an integrated and federated system. It strongly encourages local initiative and entrepreneurship but strictly controls a wide variety of rule structures at the local, city, and state level. The Graduate Center also benefits from the work of the Graduate Center
Foundation that holds and manages its financial and real estate assets. The Foundation is both independent from and closely aligned with the Graduate Center and is overseen by independent trustees that share the Graduate Center’s commitment to high quality and inclusive advanced degree education. The Foundation is subject to certain forms of regulation by the CUNY Central Office.

The Graduate Center's current operating budget is $135.8 million, mostly funded through New York State tax-levy appropriations and student tuition ($10,770 per year for full-time master’s-level students who are residents of New York.), with the balance comprised of research grants, private giving and endowment returns, and auxiliary services. During the past year, the Graduate Center faculty received over $13.7 million in external grants. Over the past five years, the fundraising efforts of the Graduate Center Foundation have exceeded $40 million in contributions. In the last five years, the Graduate Center has received approximately $7.4 million in direct appropriations for capital projects on campus.

In recent years, the Graduate Center has absorbed what amounts to a more than 6 percent cut to its base allocation due to decreased state appropriations. These reductions, which do not include the shift to the Graduate Center of other financial liabilities, form but the most recent installments in a near decade-long series of reductions that amount to some $16 million total. At least partly in response to these increased financial pressures, the Graduate Center has decreased in size in recent years. Doctoral cohorts are smaller and more selective with recent admission rates below 20 percent. Financial support for these smaller cohorts has been enhanced.

During this same period, the Graduate Center has experienced modest increases in racial and ethnic diversity. The creation of a Presidential Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion coupled with increased financial support have no doubt contributed to this upswing. At present, efforts are underway to diversify the faculty through the recruitment of stellar faculty of color. Likewise, there has been a push to hire more junior faculty.

The next President will join the Graduate Center three years into a 5-year strategic plan. Building for the Future: The Graduate Center Strategic Plan 2017-2022 set forth four main priorities:
1) Fostering and integrating communities of learning and research
2) Building the theoretical and experimental sciences
3) Advancing our public mission by increasing our impact
4) Diversifying our resources and building institutional resilience

While these efforts are very much still underway, progress has been made on all fronts. For example, with respect to the first priority, the faculty, as previously mentioned, has become more diverse – the proportion of full-time faculty from underrepresented groups is up from 15.6% in 2012 to 21.5% in 2018. A new year-long seminar has been created that utilizes an interdisciplinary approach to graduate teaching focused on a specific set of issues related to Long Island City. The successful integration of the Advanced Science Research Center into the Graduate Center has greatly expanded the Graduate Center’s potential for growth and impact in the sciences. As related to public mission, the Graduate Center has provided greater access through the creation of a number of new master’s programs, as well as three new non-degree programs slated to debut in the near future. On the issue of resources, the Graduate Center has made a concerted effort to engage alumni through annual award ceremonies, as well as recent regional events held in Albany, NY and Washington, D.C. In addition, over the past two years, four new members have joined the Graduate Center Foundation Board, further strengthening the fundraising capabilities of this important entity.
The next President will have the opportunity to build on that which has already been accomplished in the plan to date, while also incorporating new ideas where appropriate. To read the strategic plan in its entirety, as well as the Spring 2019 First Checkpoint progress report, follow this link: https://www.gc.cuny.edu/About-the-GC/Provost-s-Office/Strategic-Plan-2017-2022

The Graduate Center is located in the former B. Altman building at 365 Fifth Avenue, between 34th and 35th Streets, a landmark structure redesigned to meet the specific needs of a twenty-first century institution of advanced learning and to provide public spaces for cultural and conference purposes. The Harold M. Proshansky Auditorium, the Baisley Powell Elebash Recital Hall, the James Gallery, and the Martin E. Segal Theatre are its main venues for a regular and rich series of public programs, performances, and exhibitions.

LEADERSHIP

On July 1, 2019, Dr. James Muyskens was appointed by the CUNY Chancellor to serve as Interim President of the Graduate Center. Dr. Muyskens, a philosopher by training, served as President of Queens College for 12 years and, in 2014, returned to teaching at the Graduate Center and Hunter College. Over the course of his tenure at Queens College, he was credited with raising the school’s stature and reputation as a top-value college that excelled in serving low-income students and promoting interactions between students of different class, racial, and ethnic backgrounds. In addition, he undertook an updating of the college’s undergraduate general education curriculum and oversaw a number of improvements and additions to the physical plant. He holds a Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Michigan. Dr. Muyskens succeeds Dr. Joy Connolly, who served as Interim President from December of 2018 through June of 2019, and who has been appointed president of the American Council of Learned Societies effective July 1, 2019. A distinguished professor of classics, Connolly joined the Graduate Center as its Provost and Senior Vice President in August of 2016.
THE ROLE

Reporting to CUNY Chancellor Félix V. Matos Rodríguez, the President is the chief executive officer of the Graduate School and University Center and is responsible for supervising all of the interests of the institution while providing collaborative leadership that engages faculty, staff, and students. As with the other campuses, the Graduate Center is governed by The City University of New York Board of Trustees, a seventeen-member board responsible for the governance, maintenance, and development of all of the colleges within the CUNY system. As a member of the CUNY system, the President is a system partner with a dual obligation to the Graduate Center and the CUNY system.

The Graduate Center’s senior leadership team includes the provost and senior vice president, senior vice president for finance and administration, vice president for information technology and administrative services, vice president for communications and public affairs, vice president for institutional advancement, executive director of institutional equity and chief diversity officer, senior advisor to the president for diversity and inclusion, and legal counsel.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Leveraging the accomplishments of the last decade while facing the challenges of the present moment, the President will be expected to address the following opportunities and challenges:

*Build financial strength and diversify revenue sources*

Given limited resources, there is an ever-present need to extend the financial strength and stability of the Graduate Center while lessening the financial burden on students. The President will encourage the continued development of outstanding academic programs that will meet untapped needs in the region and generate revenue for the Center. In the past five years, the Graduate Center has established seven new master's programs, in fields as varied as digital humanities, international migration studies, cognitive neurosciences, and biography and memoir; master's enrollment has doubled since 2011. The Center is also working on the creation of non-degree programs that increase the faculty's reach and impact in New York City and build on the expertise of the Center.

Working closely with the Graduate Center Foundation and the Office for Institutional Advancement, the President will proactively identify resource needs within the GC, relating these to donor interest while making the case for the inherent impact of philanthropic support on current and future students and, by extension, the greater public good in New York City and beyond. The President will be the external face of the Graduate Center, enthusiastically sharing its story and its vision with alumni, civic leaders, and potential high-impact supporters. The President will continue to build the advancement infrastructure of the Center and engage its Foundation board in exciting projects.

Furthermore, working in partnership with faculty throughout the consortium and the CUNY Central Office, this President has the opportunity to provide the intellectual leadership that will galvanize donors and CUNY scholars around large-scale societal issues that would benefit from the Graduate Center's strengths and scope and have great impact.
Prioritize student success

The Graduate Center, under the direction of its new President, must find ways to remain affordable while vying for talented graduate students in an academic landscape brimming with well-resourced competitors. Students at the Graduate Center are keen to have a President who will, among other concerns, increase financial aid offerings so that parity exists within the GC, ensure health insurance for all, and work to improve teaching stipends. In addition to preparing doctoral students for tenure-track appointments in the academy, the Graduate Center has taken great strides in recent years to provide a number of promising pathways to non-academic employment opportunities for both doctoral and master’s graduates. A newly created Office for Career Planning and Professional Development and a Teaching and Learning Center have had an impact on student outcomes. In an increasingly competitive job market for PhDs, more work lies ahead.

Articulate a compelling case for the value and purpose of the Graduate Center

As one of the nation’s leading producers of PhDs, particularly with respect to members of underrepresented minority groups, the Graduate Center plays a pivotal role in changing the complexion of the professoriate. Moreover, as a public institution, the Graduate Center provides a level of affordability and access that distinguishes it from nearly all of its peers, both in New York City and nationwide. While the Graduate Center is a bastion of public graduate education, having earned a stellar reputation throughout the academy, its unique mission and focus would benefit from the expression of a more persuasive narrative that builds upon the aforementioned strengths. The President must ensure that the broader CUNY system is fully aware of and understands the high-level scholarship and invaluable pedagogical work that are hallmarks of the Graduate Center. The President will seek to strengthen existing relationships with the other constitutive CUNY colleges while presenting a cogent argument for the central importance of the Graduate Center as a doctoral-granting institution in a system predominantly committed to undergraduate education. With Graduate Center doctoral students responsible for teaching roughly 170,000 undergraduate students in colleges across the system, the Graduate Center is not only fundamental to the flourishing of each of the constitutive CUNY colleges, but to undergraduate education and the system as a whole. By increasing the visibility of the Graduate Center and foregrounding its unparalleled commitment to the public good, the next President will create new opportunities for external support while engendering additional goodwill within CUNY.

Promote academic excellence and innovation

As a leading research institution situated in New York City and home to a multi-disciplinary faculty employing wide-ranging academic expertise, the Graduate Center is uniquely positioned to contribute to and inform local, national, and global discourse surrounding the key social questions of our time. The next President will partner with the Provost to ensure that the Graduate Center continues to recruit and retain talented and diverse faculty and graduate students committed to public facing, high impact scholarship. In addition, the Graduate Center must redouble its efforts to improve pedagogy, foster interdisciplinary initiatives, and support novel forms of research. The President will extend the Graduate Center’s reach throughout New York, with a particular emphasis on fostering greater engagement and partnership with communities across the city. Through robust public programming and a firm belief that knowledge is a public good, the Graduate Center has cemented its status as a singular site of civic minded intellectual exchange. The next President will work in concert with faculty and graduate students to disseminate the Graduate Center’s cutting-edge research to an ever-broadening audience in the academy and beyond. With the introduction of the Advanced Science Research Center (ASRC) in the fall of 2016, the Graduate Center, lauded for its historic strengths in the humanities and social sciences, is now poised to elevate scientific research and education at CUNY in a way that places the institution and its scholars at the vanguard. The next President will work to thoughtfully
integrate the ASRC into the Graduate Center and ensure that all of the institution’s constituent parts are attended to and cohere in an organization that is at once grounded and transformative.

**Manage complex relationships both internally and externally**

Though the Graduate Center is a self-standing institution, it is part and parcel of the CUNY system. Moreover, given the critical teaching function carried out by Graduate Center doctoral students, it is, in fact, essential to the system. As a result, the President must be a dialogic leader, partnering with the various campus presidents to strengthen preexisting relationships such that the colleges across the system understand the full benefit the Graduate Center provides and, as a result, actively seek out additional opportunities to contribute faculty and resources in return. This symbiotic relationship has long been a distinguishing feature of the Graduate Center’s existence within CUNY, and will be critical to its future success and intellectual vibrancy.

Beyond the aforementioned important work at the college level, the next President must be a strong vocal advocate for the Graduate Center in conversations with both the CUNY central administration and the legislature in Albany. Building on the previously outlined opportunities and challenges, the Graduate Center needs a President capable of presenting a compelling case for graduate education and advanced research.

Finally, the President must work with GC faculty, staff, and students to chart out a course for the future that is responsive to multiple needs and varied interests, yet able to cohere around a shared vision and constitutive of CUNY’s guiding mission.

**QUALIFICATIONS**

The Graduate Center at CUNY seeks a president with the following professional experiences and personal qualities:

- A history of bold, creative, and facilitative leadership and administrative experience in an academic setting.
- A distinguished record of high-level scholarship that has greatly impacted the scholar’s given field.
- A commitment to public education.
- Strong political skills and the ability to work effectively with state and local elected officials. Knowledge of New York State and City is an advantage but is not required.
- Excellent written, verbal, and interpersonal communication skills.
- A fundamental commitment to diversity, across all communities of New York City and State, and in every aspect of university administration.
- Proven record or demonstrated skills to be an innovator and fundraiser.
- Intellectual depth; a global and interdisciplinary thinker, attuned to the scholarly missions of a great university.
• Strong management capabilities with evidence of a solid background in resource allocation, staff evaluation and development.

• An ability to balance and execute internal and external responsibilities.

• An appetite for leadership in a high-energy, complex environment and a bias toward decisive action.

• Integrity of the highest order; self-confidence without self-importance.

• A record of building excellent administrative and academic leadership teams and organizing complex systems around core missions.

NOMINATIONS AND APPLICATIONS

A 12-member search committee composed of CUNY trustees, Graduate Center faculty, students and alumni, a CUNY college president and a CUNY Vice Chancellor is conducting this search. Isaacson, Miller is assisting the search committee with the recruitment. All nominations, applications, and inquiries will be held in strict confidence.

Applications, including a résumé/CV and letter of interest, should be sent electronically to:

    Sheryl Ash, Partner
    David Ferguson, Associate
    Isaacson, Miller
    263 Summer Street, 7th Floor
    Boston, MA 02210
    617-262-6500
    http://www.imsearch.com/7105

CUNY encourages people with disabilities, minorities, veterans and women to apply. At CUNY, Italian Americans are also included among our protected groups. Applicants and employees will not be discriminated against on the basis of any legally protected category including sexual orientation or gender identity.

EEO/AA/Vet/Disability Employer