



TRANSYLVANIA UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP PROFILE

SEARCH FOR THE 29TH PRESIDENT

Defining Transylvania's Next 250 Years

- Founded in 1780, Transylvania is Kentucky's first university and one of the nation's oldest institutions of higher education.
- Nearly 250 years later, Transylvania pairs the intellectual rigor and exploration of the liberal arts with an intentionally personalized approach built on meaningful relationships and real-world experiences.
- Located in the heart of Lexington, a city of more than 300,000 in central Kentucky, Transylvania combines a close-knit residential community with the professional, cultural and civic opportunities of a thriving city.
- Transylvania's 29th president will lead the university through its 250th anniversary in 2030 and help define its ambitions for the years ahead.



Transylvania at a Glance

IDENTITY

- Private liberal arts university in Lexington, Kentucky
- Approximately 1,000 students

ACADEMICS

- More than 40 majors and a range of preprofessional pathways
- 11:1 student-faculty ratio
- Average class size of 15
- 95% of faculty hold terminal degrees

OUTCOMES & ACCESS

- 95% of graduates employed or enrolled in graduate school within six months
- 99% of students receive financial aid
- Average financial aid package: \$40,000+

STUDENT EXPERIENCE

- NCAA Division III athletics
- More than 70 student organizations
- Historic residential campus in downtown Lexington



A History of Pioneering

Transylvania's name comes from the Latin for "across the woods," a fitting description of the heavily forested region between the Ohio and Cumberland rivers encountered by early American settlers. The name was first used for the short-lived Transylvania Colony established by pioneers in the 1770s. In 1780, Thomas Jefferson, then governor of Virginia, and the Virginia Assembly chartered the school as Transylvania Seminary, the first college west of the Allegheny Mountains.

After establishing its home in Lexington, Transylvania became an important center of learning in the growing city. Its early law, medical, theological and liberal arts programs educated generations of leaders in government, business, medicine, law and education, helping Lexington earn recognition as the "Athens of the West." That history gives deeper meaning to Transylvania's Pioneer identity. Pioneering is not simply a reference to the university's past, but an enduring willingness

to explore, adapt and create new possibilities. That pioneering spirit remains an important thread connecting Transylvania's history, identity and continued evolution.

Transylvania alumni have included U.S. vice presidents, Supreme Court justices, members of Congress, governors and ambassadors. Across nearly 250 years, Transylvania has continued to evolve alongside the city of Lexington, the state of Kentucky and the nation it serves. The university has adapted to profound changes in American life and higher education while maintaining its commitment to educating students for lives of intellectual, professional and civic contribution.

Transylvania has been historically affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) since 1865, a relationship rooted in a tradition that values education, inquiry and respect across differences. The university welcomes students of all faiths and backgrounds.

Mission, Vision and Educational Philosophy

- Transylvania's liberal arts mission is grounded in intellectual curiosity, exploration and the freedom to pursue ideas across disciplines, developing independent thinkers who can approach complex questions with creativity, openness and perspective.
- Education at Transylvania is deeply personal, helping students discover what excites them, develop their talents and understand where they can make an impact. Rather than following a narrowly defined path, students are encouraged to explore multiple interests and imagine different possibilities for themselves.
- By developing both human and digital literacy, a Transylvania education prepares graduates to navigate technological, professional and societal change: not simply for a first job, but for adaptable careers, meaningful lives and continued learning.



The Transylvania Academic Experience: Personalized Academic Excellence

- Faculty engagement is at the center of the Transylvania academic experience. Faculty serve as teachers, scholars and mentors who know their students' interests, goals and ambitions, supported by an 11:1 student-faculty ratio and an average class size of 15.
- The \$156.9 million Bingham Fund for Teaching Excellence represents an enduring investment in exceptional teaching and faculty development, strengthening one of the university's most important institutional assets.
- With more than 40 majors, interdisciplinary study and the ability to design an individualized course of study, students have the flexibility to pursue multiple interests and shape an academic experience around their goals.
- Transylvania Academic Foundations supports students as they make the academic and personal transition to college. The required first-year course connects students with a student leader, staff liaison and faculty adviser while introducing them to academic expectations, advising, campus resources and opportunities that help them build a strong foundation for success at Transylvania.
- Partnerships with other universities provide pathways to advanced and professional study.

The Real-World Guarantee

- The Real-World Guarantee puts Transylvania's educational philosophy into practice by ensuring students have the opportunity to extend their learning beyond the traditional classroom through meaningful experiential learning.
- Students can pursue experiential learning through an immersive May Term course, study abroad, undergraduate research, an internship or dedicated mentorship. Mentorship experiences may include participation in Transylvania's 100

Doors to Success alumni mentoring program. These options reflect different interests, goals and ways of learning.

- These experiences encourage students to apply what they are learning, encounter new perspectives and environments, build relationships and confidence, and explore how their interests can connect to meaningful lives, careers and continued learning.



Lexington: Our Campus and Our City

- Transylvania's 70-acre residential campus in downtown Lexington includes 28 buildings, including Old Morrison, a National Historic Landmark and one of the university's most recognizable symbols. The setting offers a distinctive combination of a close-knit university community and the opportunities of a thriving city. Transylvania is one of only nine top liberal arts colleges located in a city of more than 300,000 people.
- Lexington is an extension of the Transylvania experience, connecting students with opportunities across business and entrepreneurship, health care, government, nonprofits, arts and culture, as

well as the region's signature equine, bourbon and tourism industries.

- These connections put internships, research, service, civic engagement and professional networks within minutes of campus, complementing the experiential learning at the heart of the Real-World Guarantee.
- Lexington's strong quality of life, cultural amenities, outdoor recreation and accessibility enhance the experience of living and learning at Transylvania and contribute to the university's ability to attract students, faculty and staff.



The Student Experience

- Transylvania's close-knit residential community encourages students to participate deeply in campus life, build relationships and take on leadership roles throughout their college experience.
- With more than 70 student organizations, students can explore interests and build community through leadership and service, fraternity and sorority life, arts and culture, civic engagement, campus traditions and a wide range of student-led activities.
- Students can be known and supported as individuals, fostering a sense of belonging within the broader Transylvania community.
- Transylvania encourages students to pursue multiple interests rather than fit into a single identity or path, combining academics and athletics, research and the arts, leadership and service in ways that make their college experience their own.

Athletics and Pioneer Pride

- Transylvania's athletic teams compete as the Pioneers, cheered on by our mascot, Raf, a Rafinesque's big-eared bat named for legendary Transylvania professor and naturalist Constantine Samuel Rafinesque.
- A significant share of Transylvania students participate in NCAA Division III athletics, making athletics an important part of the student experience and campus community.
- Student-athletes are deeply integrated into the broader life of the university, pursuing academic interests, leadership, service and campus involvement alongside athletic competition.
- Transylvania's athletic programs contribute to the traditions and shared sense of community that connect students to one another and to the university.

Access and Affordability

- Transylvania is committed to expanding access to a high-quality private liberal arts education and invests significant institutional and philanthropic resources in helping students and families manage its cost.
- 99% of students receive financial aid, with an average financial aid package of more than \$40,000.
- Merit and targeted scholarships, together with personalized financial aid counseling, provide multiple forms of support as students and families navigate the financial aid process.

Positioned for the Future

Transylvania approaches its 250th anniversary with significant institutional assets and a strong foundation from which its next president can lead.

- **Resources that support the academic mission.** The university benefits from longstanding philanthropic support, including a combined endowment valued at more than \$322 million as of June 30, 2026. Within that total, the \$156.9 million Bingham Endowment for Teaching Excellence represents an extraordinary and enduring investment in exceptional teaching and faculty development, providing dedicated resources that directly strengthen the university's academic mission..
- **Momentum for continued investment.** Recent record-setting gifts and philanthropic support demonstrate continued confidence in Transylvania's mission and provide momentum for continued institutional investment.
- **Relationships that extend beyond campus.** An engaged alumni community and established connections with Lexington organizations, employers and community leaders provide the university with broad networks of support, expertise and partnership.

Together, these resources, investments and relationships provide a strong foundation for the next president to build on Transylvania's strengths, address the challenges facing higher education and position the university for long-term success.

Transylvania at 250: Honoring the Past. Imagining What Comes Next.

Transylvania will celebrate its 250th anniversary in 2030, a rare milestone in American higher education. More than an opportunity to commemorate the university's history, the anniversary creates a moment to reflect on what has endured, articulate Transylvania's ambitions for the years ahead and build momentum around what comes next.

- **Honor the past while looking forward.** The 250th anniversary provides an opportunity to celebrate the people, ideas and traditions that have shaped Transylvania while considering how its pioneering spirit and liberal arts mission will continue to evolve for new generations of students.
- **Strengthen connections and expand Transylvania's reach.** The anniversary can deepen engagement with alumni, donors, Lexington and communities across Kentucky while creating a platform to elevate Transylvania's visibility and demonstrate the continuing relevance of a Transylvania education.
- **Shape the university's next chapter.** The 29th president will have the opportunity to lead Transylvania across this historic threshold, helping the university articulate its ambitions for the decades ahead and build broad enthusiasm for what comes next.



The Role

As the chief executive officer of Transylvania University, the President leads the affairs of the University and reports to the Board of Trustees. The President provides strategic, academic, financial, and organizational leadership for the institution and serves as its principal external ambassador.

The President also directs the senior leadership team, directly overseeing the following campus leaders:

- Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the University
- Executive Vice President for Business Affairs and Chief Financial Officer
- Senior Vice President for Enrollment Management
- Vice President for Advancement
- Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students
- Vice President for Athletics and Athletic Director
- Interim Vice President for Infrastructure and Partnerships
- Director of Public Safety
- Director of Human Resources
- Chief of Staff



Priorities

- Growing enrollment and strengthening financial sustainability
- Strengthen recruitment, retention, and student success by aligning enrollment management, academic affairs, financial aid, student life, advancement, and marketing around clear goals and shared accountability;
- Strengthen long-term financial sustainability through disciplined stewardship, thoughtful resource allocation, and appropriate new sources of revenue, advancing the strategic plan's goal of increasing the endowment;
- Sharpen and communicate Transylvania's value proposition, distinguishing the University in a competitive market by combining the enduring strengths of the liberal arts with outstanding student outcomes and the advantages of a downtown Lexington location;
- Evaluate opportunities for new and differentiated academic offerings, including accelerated, graduate, and nontraditional programs, where they advance the mission and respond to student and market demand; and
- Lead a comprehensive, data-informed strategy to grow full-time enrollment while sustaining the highly personalized character of a Transylvania education;
- Balance access and affordability with the resources required to sustain academic quality, a vibrant residential experience, and competitive support for faculty and staff;





RAISING VISIBILITY, PHILANTHROPY, AND EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT

- Serve as Transylvania's chief ambassador and storyteller, communicating with energy and conviction what distinguishes the University and why its mission matters;
- Lead ambitious fundraising efforts and the University's 250th anniversary campaign, building on recent philanthropic momentum to strengthen the endowment and increase support for scholarships, academic excellence, student experiences, and institutional priorities;
- Deepen the engagement of alumni and trustees, drawing on their expertise, networks, advocacy, and philanthropy to advance the University;
- Build productive relationships with foundations, corporations, community organizations, and other partners that expand resources and opportunities for Transylvania students;
- Elevate Transylvania's profile and reputation in Lexington, across Kentucky, throughout the region, and nationally as a distinctive destination for a transformative liberal arts education;
- Serve as an active civic leader and strengthen the reciprocal relationship between the University and Lexington, using the city as both an extension of the educational experience and a platform for Transylvania's impact; and
- Use the approaching 250th anniversary as an opportunity to celebrate the University's history while building broad enthusiasm and investment in its next chapter.

ADVANCING A DISTINCTIVE, FUTURE-READY LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION

- Champion Transylvania's liberal arts mission and articulate why a broad, rigorous, personalized education is increasingly valuable in a world shaped by rapid technological, economic, and social change;
- Inspire continued excellence in teaching, learning, and scholarship; support faculty as the University evolves its curriculum and pedagogy for the needs of 21st-century students;
- Advance a student experience that connects academic learning with career preparation, leadership development, athletics, campus life, and meaningful community engagement;
- Expand access to high-impact experiences, including paid internships, research, study abroad, alumni mentoring, and other experiential opportunities that prepare students for lives and careers of purpose;
- Leverage the University's location in Lexington to connect students more intentionally with employers, health care organizations, nonprofits, civic institutions, arts and cultural organizations, and entrepreneurial opportunities;
- Encourage innovation while preserving the close faculty-student relationships, intellectual curiosity, and sense of community that define the Transylvania experience.





INSPIRING AND UNITING THE TRANSYLVANIA COMMUNITY

- Lead with visible energy, optimism, decisiveness, accessibility, and a genuine enthusiasm for students, becoming an active presence in the daily life of the University;
- Steward a culture of trust through transparent communication, consistent engagement, and a willingness to listen carefully to faculty, staff, students, alumni, and trustees;
- Foster a culture of collaboration, respect, belonging, civil discourse, and institutional pride while helping the community navigate change constructively;
- Work effectively within principles of shared governance, respecting the expertise and appropriate roles of the Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, students, and administration;
- Recruit, develop, retain, and empower talented faculty and staff and create an environment in which people understand how their work contributes to the University's priorities;
- Direct a strong senior leadership team, establishing clear goals and accountability while empowering leaders to execute effectively; and
- Model integrity, resilience, empathy, curiosity, and a spirit of partnership in service of the University and its students.



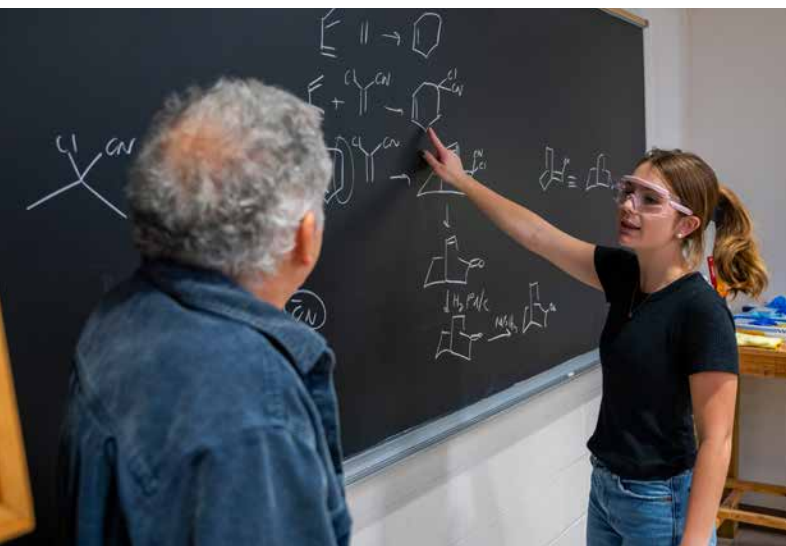
Qualifications

Transylvania University seeks an inspirational, decisive, collaborative, and forward-looking leader who can build on the University's distinctive strengths while positioning it for long-term success. The ideal next President will combine a deep appreciation for the liberal arts with the strategic and operational acumen required to lead a tuition-dependent institution in a changing higher education environment.

The President should possess the intellectual standing and experience needed to inspire an academic community, along with the personal presence to engage students, faculty, staff, alumni, donors, civic leaders, and partners. Candidates may bring a range of professional and academic backgrounds, but must demonstrate a clear respect for academic excellence, shared governance, and Transylvania's educational mission.

Strong candidates are expected to demonstrate excellence in most of the following areas:

- Developing and communicating a compelling strategic vision and translating that vision into clear priorities, measurable goals, and results;
- Leading innovation in academic programs, student experiences, partnerships, or technology while remaining grounded in mission and institutional identity;
- Drive robust fundraising in service of capital projects, endowment growth, institutional sustainability, and community-focused storytelling on behalf of faculty, staff, and students;
- Leading organizations through growth, change, and periods requiring disciplined financial choices and resource prioritization;
- Making difficult choices after listening to and consulting with relevant constituencies;
- Building relationships with alumni, donors, foundations, corporations, civic leaders, and community partners and inspiring others to invest time, expertise, and resources;
- Collaborating effectively with a Board of Trustees and maintaining a clear understanding of the respective roles of governance and management; and
- Leading with energy, optimism, resilience, empathy, intellectual curiosity, and a genuine commitment to student success.





Contact

Nominations, inquiries, and expressions of interest should be sent to TransylvaniaUniversity@russellreynolds.com. While materials will be received until the position is filled, for best consideration, please submit a CV and an (optional) cover letter by October 30, 2026.

Transylvania University is an Equal Opportunity Employer and is committed to enhancing the diversity of the university community. In support of this goal, we embrace diversity and encourage applications from qualified candidates with a wide range of backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences.

