

DEAN, COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS LEADERSHIP PROFILE



MARSHALL UNIVERSITY
One John Marshall Drive
Huntington, WV 25755
www.marshall.edu





MARSHALL UNIVERSITY

Founded as Marshall Academy in 1837, Marshall University has developed into a public comprehensive research university with a rich history as one of the oldest institutions of higher learning in West Virginia. The institution takes its name in honor of the fourth and longest serving Chief Justice of the United States, John Marshall.

Marshall University was granted university status formally in 1961. Now, with its president, Brad D. Smith, and a new provost expected to be in place in January 2026, the university is poised to build upon its past strengths and develop its vision for a future in support of its students and its region. The university is in Huntington, West Virginia, with additional campuses in South Charleston, Point Pleasant, and Beckley. Marshall is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission.

In Fall 2024, the university enrolled 12,290 students: 9,136 undergraduates, 2,483 graduate, and 671 professional degree students. Marshall achieved Doctoral University, High Research Activity, R2 status in 2018 and offers more than 150 undergraduate, graduate, and professional degree programs organized into thirteen academic colleges and schools. Known as the Thundering Herd, university athletics participates in the NCAA Division I Sun Belt Conference in 17 sports and has a National Championship soccer team.

Marshall University is situated in a region of great natural beauty. Huntington is nestled in the heart of the Appalachian Mountain region, bordered by the Ohio River to the north and located close to a variety of state and national forests and parks.

MISSION

Marshall University is a public comprehensive university with a rich history as one of the oldest institutions of higher learning in West Virginia. Marshall University advances the public good through innovative, accredited educational programs. Marshall University's mission, inspired by our Vision and Creed, includes a commitment to:

- Offer a wide range of high quality, affordable, and accessible undergraduate, graduate, and professional education that prepares students to think, learn, work, and live in an evolving global society.
- Create opportunities and experiences to foster understanding and appreciation of the rich diversity of thought and culture.
- Maintain a dynamic intellectual, artistic, and cultural life by promoting and supporting research and creative activities by undergraduates, graduates, and faculty.
- Contribute to the quality of life of the community, region, and beyond through applied research, economic development, health care, and cultural enrichment.
- Cultivate the development of an inclusive, just, and equitable community.

VISION

The vision of Marshall University is to inspire learning and creativity that ignites the mind, nurtures the spirit, and fulfills the promise of a better future.

THE MARSHALL CREED

Inspired by the example of John Marshall, we the students, faculty, staff, and administrators of Marshall University, pledge to pursue the development of our intellects and the expansion of knowledge, and to devote ourselves to defending individual rights and exercising civic responsibility. We strive to exemplify in our own lives the core values of John Marshall's character: independence, initiative, achievement, ethical integrity, and commitment to community through association and service. As Marshall University, we form a community that promotes educational goals and that allows individuals maximum opportunity to pursue those goals.



We are:

- **An Educational Community** in which all members work together to promote and strengthen teaching and learning;
- **An Open Community** uncompromisingly protecting freedom of thought, belief and expression;
- **A Civil Community** treating all individuals and groups with consideration, decency, and respect, and expressing disagreements in rational ways;
- **A Responsible Community** accepting obligations and following behavioral guidelines designed to support the common good;
- **A Safe Community** respecting each other's rights, privacy and property;
- **A Well Community** respecting and promoting physical and emotional health;
- **An Ethical Community** reflecting honesty, integrity and fairness in both academic and extracurricular activities;
- **A Pluralistic Community** celebrating and learning from our diversity;
- **A Socially Conscious Community** acting as citizens of the world and seeking to contribute to the betterment of people and their environments;
- **A Judicious Community** remaining alert to the threats posed by hatred, intolerance and other injustices and ever-prepared to correct them.

THE FACULTY

There are 897 full-time faculty at Marshall University (including Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine and Marshall University Libraries), with 86% of them having a doctoral or a terminal degree in their fields. Faculty members are dedicated to excellence in teaching. They also embrace the responsibility of advancing research, scholarship, and creative endeavors and are expected to contribute meaningfully through service. Each year, Marshall University honors its faculty by presenting awards for outstanding teaching, notable scholarship, and distinguished service.



THE CAMPUSES

The Huntington campus of Marshall University encompasses about 90 acres. It is bounded on the north by Third Avenue, on the south by Fifth Avenue, on the west by Huntington's Central Business District, and on the east by Twentieth Street. The Medical School is located several blocks to the south. This campus is 50 miles west of the West Virginia state capital, Charleston, 126 miles east of Lexington, Kentucky, 135 miles southeast of Columbus, Ohio, and 147 miles southeast of Cincinnati, Ohio.

The South Charleston campus of Marshall University lies 46 miles to the east of the campus in Huntington, and covers about 29 acres in South Charleston, West Virginia.

LINKS TO MARSHALL UNIVERSITY:

<https://www.marshall.edu/meet-marshall/>

<https://www.marshall.edu/academics/>

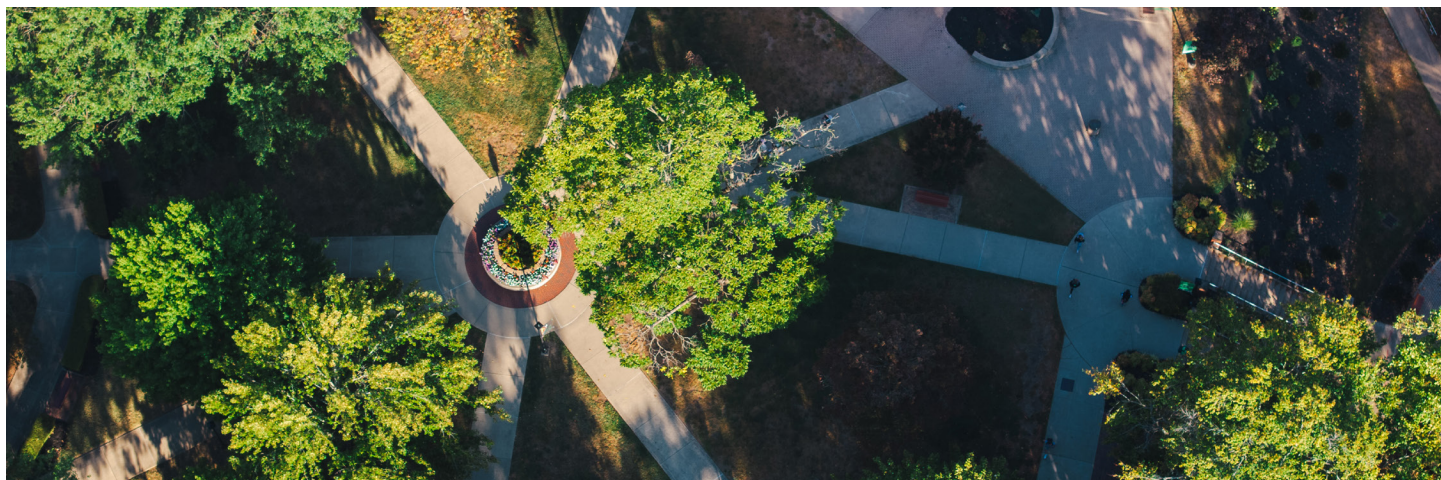
<https://www.marshall.edu/faculty-staff/>

<https://herdzone.com/>

<https://www.usnews.com/best-colleges/marshall-university-3815>

<https://www.marshall.edu/strategicplan/>

<https://bit.ly/4gRh2f6>





THE COMMUNITY—HUNTINGTON, WV METROPOLITAN AREA

Marshall is located in the tri-state region bordering Kentucky and Ohio, with a population of 356,581 in the Huntington-Ashland metropolitan area. Huntington is 50 minutes west of the state capital in Charleston and offers many amenities, including a symphony orchestra, a museum of fine arts, and an artist series. In 2017, Huntington was named "America's Best Community" in the America's Best Communities competition. In 2012, the American Planning Association named the city's 100-acre-plus Ritter Park one of the country's 10 Great Public Spaces. Huntington also features a pedestrian trail system, numerous local restaurants, a variety of festivals, the Central City antique district, and the West Edge factory with a new theater and event space. Huntington has received a perfect score in the Municipal Equality Index for the past six years. Its Open to All campaign reaffirms the city's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Although Huntington is only a few hours' drive from major metropolitan areas (e.g., Cincinnati, Columbus, Nashville, Lexington, Louisville, and Pittsburgh), West Virginia's population density is considerably less than the national average and the state is considered one of the nation's safest. The cost of living is, on average, lower than the rest of the country.

The relationship between the university and Huntington is extraordinarily positive and mutually beneficial. Marshall serves as a culture center, while also playing a major role in rural health care delivery, improvement of elementary and secondary education, and regional economic development. Marshall's economic impact in the region is estimated at more than \$1.5 billion annually, a 20:1 return on public dollars invested in the university.

<https://bit.ly/3DVJZb1>

<https://www.wowktv.com/news/huntington-named-one-of-the-top-100-cities-to-live-retire/>

<https://www.cityofhuntington.com/residents/americas-best-communities>

THE COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

The College of Liberal Arts is committed to excellence in higher education. We have the responsibility to preserve, transmit, interpret, and create knowledge in an environment of free inquiry and expression. We will provide instruction that forms the core of the undergraduate curriculum for all Marshall University students so they may think critically and imaginatively, communicate effectively, and understand various dimensions of human experience. Within the disciplines of the college, we will provide specialized instruction for undergraduate and graduate students, enabling them to develop the intellectual and moral abilities to live autonomous, sensitive, and productive lives. We will be active scholars who contribute to the wider academic community. We will continue to use our expertise in the service of others.

The College of Liberal Arts is among the largest of the colleges. It had 129 faculty in Fall 2024 and 1,050+ total students, 250+ grad and 800 undergraduates, enrolled in its degree programs. In academic year 2024-25, it taught over 75,000 SCHs, nearly one-quarter of the university total. Of these, more than 27,500 SCHs were delivered on-line.

MISSION

The College of Liberal Arts develops skills in creative problem solving, team building, global awareness, an understanding of diversity, written and oral communication skills, and more. Since ancient times, the liberal arts have helped humans discover our place in the world and our connections with others.

Moreover, through the liberal arts, one learns how to make wise decisions about who we want to be, how we want to live, and how our choices affect our communities and culture for the better.

In the College of Liberal Arts, students will develop a broad perspective, an understanding of other cultures and languages, and how one may conquer the challenges faced personally and professionally throughout life.





LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND PRIORITIES PROVIDE TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP

The College of Liberal Arts has a deep history of teaching, research, and service to the campus and community. Building on this history, the new dean will provide insightful and collaborative leadership for the college, university, and region, creating a strategic vision and maintaining a strategic planning process aligned with broader university goals and priorities.

Within the college, the dean will lead initiatives that foster inclusive excellence and promote multicultural and global competence, ensuring all stakeholders are engaged in shaping its academic future. The dean will provide inclusive and collaborative leadership, mentoring department chairs, faculty, staff, and students to achieve excellence in teaching, research, and service. Through a commitment to integrity, innovation, and shared purpose, the dean will foster an environment that encourages interdisciplinary collaboration and positions the college for continued growth and distinction.

Externally, the dean will serve as a representative and enthusiastic advocate for the college and university, elevating their profile across the state's higher education institutions and among local, regional, national, and international community partners. The dean will actively engage with diverse stakeholders, including industry, government, community organizations, and research partners, forging strategic alliances that enhance the college's visibility and impact. By cultivating these connections, the dean will strengthen the college's reputation and expand its role in addressing complex challenges and advancing societal goals.

Nationwide trends show a decline in students pursuing liberal arts degrees as perceptions of career-focused fields, like STEM and business, dominate students' and parents' choices about areas of study. The new dean must be a passionate advocate for the college, articulating the vital role of liberal arts education in fostering critical thinking, communication, and adaptability. By demonstrating the relevance of these skills to both personal growth and professional success, the dean will ensure the college's enduring value in a results-driven society. Beyond advocacy, the dean must work directly with faculty and programs to ensure liberal arts graduates possess the knowledge and skills that meet employer expectations. This includes integrating experiential learning opportunities, internships, and professional development into academic programs to position students for successful careers in support of the university's goal of achieving 100% placement rates for graduates and enabling lifetime achievement.

THE COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS DEAN'S OFFICE

The dean, reporting directly to the provost and senior vice president for academic affairs, is responsible for all aspects of academic life within the college, including teaching, research, personnel matters, and budgets. Serving as the chief academic and administrative officer of COLA, the dean oversees all operational, fiscal, and strategic matters of the college. The dean develops and maintains the highest standards for academic excellence and accomplishment and serves as the spokesperson of the college to external partners.

COLA LINKS

<https://www.marshall.edu/cola/>

<https://www.marshall.edu/cola/cola-departments-programs/>

<https://www.marshall.edu/academics/>

THE OPPORTUNITY

The next dean will bring fresh perspectives, inspiring leadership, and a commitment to meaningful growth, driving the college toward greater excellence and impact.

ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

The dean will engage in strategic enrollment management planning and implementation as a key function of the position. Marshall's president has set ambitious goals for enrollment that go beyond reversing declines to achieving significant expansion of the college's undergraduate and graduate enrollment, retention, and graduation rates. To do this, the dean must be prepared to expand the reach of the college's in-person, online, and hybrid programs, drawing nontraditional students and students from outside the tri-state area.

The "demographic cliff" poses a significant challenge to higher education nationwide including West Virginia due to population trends. However, under President Brad Smith's leadership since 2022, Marshall University has seen robust growth, with total enrollment increasing by 13.4% and first-time freshmen growing by 18.8% from Fall 2022 to Fall 2024. Fall 2025 enrollment is on track for the third straight year of growth. The new dean will play a key role in sustaining this momentum by prioritizing student recruitment and retention, collaborating with enrollment management and student success, and leading efforts to develop, revamp, and innovate degree programs that attract students and prepare them for lifelong success in alignment with the university's strategic priorities of increasing access and ensuring affordability.

STRENGTHEN RESOURCE ACQUISITION, ALLOCATION AND MANAGEMENT

The dean will identify, attract, and strategically manage financial resources for the college. This begins with effectively managing its annual budget including state appropriations, revenue programs, private gifts, grants and endowment balance.



With Marshall's adoption of an Incentivized Budget Model, the new dean must navigate financial challenges while seizing opportunities to grow revenues. By leading increases in credit hour production, attraction of additional students to liberal arts majors, addition of external grants and philanthropy, while efficiently allocating resources, the dean will ensure the college meets its dual missions of education and scholarship. Careful budget management will be essential, balancing operational needs with investments in faculty, staff, and student success.

The dean will also have responsibility for community outreach and fundraising on a significant scale. There is long-standing community and statewide support for Marshall, and its programs are well situated to conduct the outreach needed to increase financial support for the college and its programs. The dean will build on past successes and significantly grow the endowment.

To accomplish this, the dean will work closely with the Marshall University Foundation to cultivate relationships with alumni and friends of the college and secure financial resources through development efforts and initiatives.

COLLABORATIONS

As a central part of the University, the College of Liberal Arts has a unique opportunity to break down disciplinary silos and collaborate across campus. The dean will champion partnerships with other colleges at Marshall University to create innovative, interdisciplinary programs, enhancing the college's relevance and expanding its reach.

The ongoing revision of the General Education curriculum presents a pivotal opportunity for the college to help shape the core educational experience of all students at Marshall University. Whether in critical thinking, communication, or cultural awareness, the liberal arts are integral to General Education. A new dean should actively engage in this process and work collaboratively with other colleges and stakeholders, ensuring the inclusion of courses and competencies that reflect the strengths of the college and advocating for a curriculum that prepares students for both personal and professional success.

TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION AND ADAPTATION

Rapid advancements in technology, especially in artificial intelligence, are reshaping traditional liberal arts skills such as writing, as well as research and teaching of the liberal arts. The new dean will lead the college in adopting these technologies thoughtfully, while preserving its core mission. This includes encouraging the integration of modern teaching methods, such as active learning, and expanding hybrid and online program and course offerings to attract non-traditional and working students, aligning with the strategic priority of on-demand delivery to attract diverse student populations.

BUILD ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH EXCELLENCE

The dean will apply cutting-edge knowledge of national and international trends and priorities to develop new and improved academic programs and continuing education opportunities. This includes focused efforts to attract and retain quality faculty and students.

The dean will ensure that institutional and program-specific accreditation and assessment requirements continue to be met. The dean will monitor ongoing quality and continuous improvement in the college's academic programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, and in both traditional and online programs.

The dean must lead the college in embracing its role in advancing research, scholarship, and creative endeavors. Recently, the college received a five year, \$2.8M grant from the Mellon Foundation to expand humanities internships for undergraduates. As Marshall University's research profile grows as a Carnegie R2 institution, the next dean will foster a culture of scholarly excellence and build the college's research portfolio by supporting faculty research, growing external research grants and contracts, launching and growing doctoral programs, and increasing the college's contributions to the University's expanding research ecosystem.



QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND CREDENTIALS

The College of Liberal Arts seeks a leader who is visionary, inspirational, adaptable, and innovative who will accelerate the momentum of the college. The new dean will be a collaborative, student-centered person who has the capacity for out-of-the-box thinking and calculated risk taking. The new dean will bring innovative ideas, fresh perspectives, and forward-thinking approaches coupled with a proven ability to enhance research, advance scholarship, and energize teaching and learning.

The successful candidate will be a courageous, strong advocate for the college's academic programs and will ensure high quality performance in all the college's offerings. They will demonstrate a successful track record of building enrollment as well as internal and external partnerships that enhance revenue. A terminal degree is required.

The new dean also will ideally have the following attributes and experiences:

- An established record in teaching, research, and service sufficient to merit tenure as a full professor in one of the college's departments.
- A commitment to the relationship between high-quality teaching, scholarship, and service in strengthening academic excellence.
- A track record of effective administration and leadership of faculty in a large and multifaceted educational organization.
- Proven experience in leading strategic planning and growth initiatives based on innovation in areas such as curriculum, teaching and learning, accreditation and assessment, and technology-enabled instruction.
- A commitment to inclusive excellence and a track record of positive actions that result in a more diverse faculty, staff, and student body.
- An understanding of shared governance and the roles and privileges of faculty in furthering the accomplishments and reach of the college.
- High emotional intelligence, communication, and listening skills, with a poised, engaging public presence.
- A practice of maintaining visibility and accessibility.
- A high energy level and strong work ethic.
- A track record of success in fundraising or the aptitude for this important role.
- A track record of securing and managing external grants and contracts.
- A willingness to be a gifted and tireless advocate for the college with public officials.
- An interest in utilizing the resources of the college to strengthen the quality of life in Huntington.
- The highest standards of integrity and transparency.
- A strong desire to make a significant commitment to COLA, Marshall University, and Huntington.

IN SEARCH OF EXCELLENCE

NOMINATIONS AND APPLICATIONS

Representing AGB Search, Senior Executive Search Consultants Sally Mason, Garry W. Owens and Executive Search Consultant Sarah Dirksen will be assisting the Marshall University Dean, College of Liberal Arts Search Committee. Should prospective nominators or potential candidates have questions or wish to seek additional information, they are encouraged to email Dr. Mason (sally.mason@agbsearch.com), Dr. Owens (garry.owens@agbsearch.com), or Ms. Dirksen (sarah.dirksen@agbsearch.com) to arrange time for a confidential conversation prior to submitting materials.

Applicants are requested to submit the following materials:

1. A letter of interest, which addresses specifically how the candidate's experiences and qualifications intersect with the Marshall University Dean, College of Liberal Arts' listed responsibilities, required qualifications, expected experience, and Strategic Priorities as outlined in the **Leadership Profile**;
2. A current **curriculum vitae**; and
3. A list of **five professional references** with email addresses, telephone numbers and a brief explanation of your professional relationship. (References will not be contacted without prior authorization from the applicant).

For full consideration, application materials should be submitted through the AGB Search portal system accessible via this link <http://bit.ly/44zDKDE> by **August 18, 2025**. Please direct any questions regarding the application process to Marshall-COLA@agbsearch.com and expressions of interest are encouraged and should be directed to Marshall-COLA@agbsearch.com or the search consultants listed above.

It is the policy of Marshall University to provide equal opportunities to all prospective and current members of the student body, faculty, and staff on the basis of individual qualifications and merit without regard to race, color, sex, religion, age, disability, national origin, gender identity, or sexual orientation. This nondiscrimination policy also applies to all programs and activities covered under Title IX, which prohibits sex-based and gender-based discrimination in higher education. Marshall University strives to provide educational opportunities for minorities and women in the graduate student body which reflect the interest, individual merit and availability of such individuals. The University ensures equality of opportunity and treatment in all areas related to student admissions, instructions, employment, placement accommodations, financial assistance programs and other services.

