



THE SEARCH FOR CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER



Rhodes College aspires to graduate students with a life-long passion for learning, a compassion for others, and the ability to translate academic study and personal concern into effective leadership and action in their communities and the world. Rhodes has built a unique place for itself among the nation's top liberal arts colleges by combining a powerful commitment to the liberal arts with unusually rich connections to the surrounding City of Memphis, Tennessee. Rhodes has twice been named "The #1 Most Service-Oriented College in the United States" by *Newsweek*, and civic engagement is integrated into the curriculum for all students. Recently, Rhodes was included in the new Princeton Review college guide, *Colleges that Create Futures: 50 Colleges that Launch Careers by Going Beyond the Classroom*.



**Rhodes College seeks a creative,
collaborative, and strategic
information technology leader
for the position of
Chief Information Officer.**

Working closely with the President and reporting to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Chief Information Officer (CIO) will partner with faculty, staff, students, and administrators to design and implement a comprehensive and forward-looking vision for leveraging information, data, space, and technology in support of the college's mission. The CIO role has greatly expanded at liberal arts colleges, and we seek candidates who can play a critical and highly visible role in advancing the academic and administrative work of the college. The CIO will develop a clear strategic vision for information services and data management, and they will bring excellent communication and organizational management skills.

LEADERSHIP



Jennifer M. Collins was named the 21st president of Rhodes College on Dec. 6, 2021, following a unanimous vote by the Board of Trustees. An inspiring leader, beloved educator, and committed proponent of the value of the liberal arts, she has served since 2014 as the Judge James Noel Dean and professor of law at Southern Methodist University.

At SMU, she works with more than 100 faculty members and supports more than 800 domestic and international students. She has responsibility for managing a \$49 million annual budget; hiring, supporting, and retaining faculty and staff; fundraising; and managing internal and external communications. During her tenure, she has raised more than \$50 million for scholarships, endowed chairs and professorships, and new academic and student programming. In a time of declining interest in legal education, she has increased the number of applications to the law school every year, exceeding both the national and regional averages, and improved the entering academic credentials and diversity of the student body. Collins also vastly increased alumni engagement by creating a new umbrella alumni organization and an Emerging Leaders Board for recent graduates.

Collins joined the law faculty at Wake Forest University (NC) in 2003 and was named associate provost for academic and strategic initiatives in 2010 and vice provost in 2013. As the first law professor to hold these roles, she was responsible for strategic planning, the fostering of interdisciplinary partnerships, budgeting, faculty and student recruitment, and the enhancement of the undergraduate and graduate student experience across multiple schools.

Collins will assume her responsibilities on July 1, 2022.

Katherine Clay Bassard

was appointed Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs July 1, 2020, and also serves as professor of English and Africana studies.

She previously served as interim senior associate dean for faculty affairs in the College of Hu-



manities and Sciences at Virginia Commonwealth University, following two years as senior vice provost for faculty affairs. Her comprehensive past administrative achievements align well with priorities of the provost set by the college, including implementing a new strategic plan alongside the vice president of strategic initiatives, championing diversity and inclusion efforts, and supporting faculty development, leadership, and curriculum development. Bassard also works with the vice president for student life to provide the best possible holistic learning experience for Rhodes students.

As the Provost, she leads the faculty in all aspects of the curriculum and shared governance. The Provost's Office oversees Information Services, the Registrar's Office, and a variety of centers and institutes with curricular and co-curricular portfolios. She represents the goals and aspirations of Rhodes to external constituencies and advocates for the academic priorities of the college in all aspects of the college's overall mission.



THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The college approved its ambitious strategic plan, [Achieving Our Best: A Strategic Vision for Rhodes College, 2020-2030](#), in October 2019. The plan is the result of an 18-month planning process that included the voices of more than 5,000 students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents, Memphians, prospective students, and their families through qualitative and quantitative research.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, recent changes to the broader environment, and ongoing societal and demographic change, the Planning and Priorities Task Force was recently charged with reviewing the strategic plan and recommending priorities and budget guidelines to strengthen the college's financial position, build academic excellence, and create conditions for thriving into the future. The Board endorsed the recommendations of the Planning and Priorities Task Force in October 2020.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

In April 2021, the Board of Trustees approved the [Rhodes Framework for Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility Strategies](#), also known as the IDEAS Framework. The IDEAS Framework follows directly from the college's strategic plan, which identifies as central priorities the following: adopting best practices for equity and inclusion; developing opportunities for cross-cultural engagement, interfaith dialogue, and inclusive excellence; and developing a more diverse workforce.

The IDEAS Framework identifies viable short-term and longer-term institutional goals and outlines specific steps Rhodes will take to accomplish its inclusive excellence goals over the next three years. The action plan focuses on seven priorities:

1. Commitment
2. Culture
3. Capacity
4. Curriculum, Pedagogy, and Faculty Development
5. Compensation and Employment
6. Climate
7. Campus Life and Community



STUDENTS

Rhodes is home to a diverse group of approximately 2,030 students who represent 46 states (plus D.C.) and 63 countries. Within the current student body, 31% identify as multicultural and/or international students, and the class of 2020 boasted a record 33% who identify as multicultural and/or international students. Effective fall 2022, the College is transitioning from a two-year residency requirement to a three-year residency requirement, at which point nearly 80% of students will live on campus. The student body has a 41:59 male-to-female ratio.

Rhodes students are intellectually curious and deeply engaged in academic and extracurricular activities. Students with a personal commitment to service are drawn to Rhodes and to the many opportunities to integrate themselves into the greater Memphis community, and more than 80% of students participate in service activities. Rhodes actively recruits students who are excited to be part of the city, seeking opportunities to connect with Memphis in ways that are mutually beneficial and meaningful.

Rhodes has enjoyed strong enrollment success over the last five years, with steady growth in both the quantity and quality of applications. Application numbers increased from 4,731 to a record 6,310 for the 2020-2021 admission cycle. The impressive growth in Early Decision commitments has provided Rhodes with strong enrollment positioning, comprising 20% of the current class and now 32% of the incoming class. The median SAT has increased to 1400 from a historical range of 1310-1330 in recent years (a test optional policy went into effect for the entering class fall 2021 and will remain in place through at least 2023). Over half these students have ranked in the top 10% of their high school class with a median GPA of 3.8.

FACULTY

Rhodes faculty members represent the best of the scholar-teacher model that is essential to a liberal arts education. Scholarly and creative production across the board is unusually high for a liberal arts college, and engaging undergraduates in faculty research – in the humanities and social sciences as well as the natural sciences – is standard practice. Virtually all of the faculty hold the highest degrees in their respective fields and contribute regularly to the scholarship of their disciplines. Many have been recognized for their excellence with grants from the NSF, NIH, NEH, NASA, and the Mellon Foundation, Fulbright awards, and numerous other honors including a recent faculty invitation to join the prestigious Council on Foreign Relations. Rhodes honors faculty accomplishment through institutional awards for teaching, scholarship, and service and supports the ongoing development of the faculty through such programs as the Hill Grant for curricular innovation, the Faculty Development Endowment Grants for faculty scholarship, and an extensive mentorship program for incoming faculty. Rhodes is committed to sustaining an environment in which faculty can thrive in their careers and make substantial contributions to the college community and their scholarly communities.

STAFF AND ADMINISTRATION

Rhodes employs just over 300 exceptionally dedicated administrators and staff who join the faculty in serving the educational mission of the college and cultivating the character of its students. Staff members are an integral part of the community. Continuing to value the contributions of staff members at all levels of the college is essential to maintaining the sense of common purpose, civility, and respect within the community. Rhodes is proud to recognize particularly outstanding staff contributions at its annual Service Recognition program which includes recognition for years of service and four awards for outstanding staff.



ROLE OF THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

As head of a broad portfolio that includes Information Technology, Academic Technologies, and Barret Library, the CIO will lead a staff of collegial, committed, and highly customer-focused professionals. The new CIO will be pleased to discover that the library, academic technologies, and information technology staff at Rhodes are deeply interconnected and work together seamlessly to maximize the quality and efficiency of their services to the campus community. As an expert in both organizational and technical best practices, the CIO will lead 24 talented, dedicated, and highly motivated staff members within the Information Services (IS) division. The direct reports to the CIO currently include:

- Director of the Paul Barret, Jr. Library
- Director of Academic Technologies
- Director of Infrastructure and Enterprise Applications
- Administrative Assistant for the Office of Information Services

Reporting to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, the CIO will work closely with the Provost and the President's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and will also participate in meetings of the Board of Trustees, which meets three times a year.

In addition, the CIO serves on the Technology and Academic Space Committee (TASC) alongside five faculty members, the Associate Provost, Director of Barret Library, Director of Academic Technologies, and the Director of Physical Plant. Together, TASC represents the needs and priorities of the academic divisions of the college. The committee's charge is to: 1) address immediate concerns and current problems with academic space and technology in classrooms, lecture halls, and performance spaces; 2) facilitate long-term planning of technology needs and services; 3) support faculty technology needs; 4) review policies and practices regarding the use of technology in the classroom; and 5) liaise with Library Services, Student Affairs, and other offices as needed.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The next Chief Information Officer will have the opportunity to address the following priorities:

- Leading, mentoring, and growing a strong and highly respected team of information professionals. The CIO will lead a highly intelligent, talented, and dedicated IS staff that is committed to customer service. The CIO will empower the IS staff with the knowledge and authority to provide creative solutions and top-quality customer service. They will promote best practices by ensuring continued professional development opportunities. The CIO will also make strategic and impactful hiring decisions that will make best use of the college's investment in the IS division and continue to build upon the healthy and supportive collaborative culture of the unit.
- Working closely with the Director of the Paul Barret, Jr. Library, the CIO will support, provide forward-looking growth opportunities, and mentor on strategic issues in the support of faculty and students in teaching, learning, and research for the 21st century liberal arts college library.
- Working closely with the Director of Academic Technologies to partner with departments and divisions in Academic Affairs in enhancing the college's remote capabilities in teaching, learning, and research. In alignment with Academic Affairs, the CIO will focus more broadly on work with faculty and students regarding aspects of technology and pedagogy to help them:
 - Achieve their learning objectives through consultation and the services of Information Services;
 - Ensure a seamless user experience;
 - Provision scalable solutions and cost effective practices; and,
 - Drive progress in institutional student success initiatives.
- Working closely with Human Resources and Finance/Business Affairs to support post-pandemic options for hybrid or remote work so that Rhodes can have access to the highest quality pool of candidates possible.
- Reviewing information technology throughout the college with the aim of further enhancing the academic mission. In collaboration with faculty and academic leaders across the college, the CIO will assess current policies and systems to determine whether they meet current and future needs, and to determine how they might be adjusted for optimum impact. The CIO will ensure that technology and library resources meet the needs of Rhodes' nationally recognized academic program, reflect best practices in pedagogy and scholarship, and demonstrably contribute to the student learning experience.
- Providing creative and innovative solutions for the challenge of evolving and transforming enterprise systems responsible for Rhodes' strategic processes. Rhodes utilizes a typically diverse collection of software platforms. The CIO will need to collaborate closely with academic and business units across campus to assess the performance of current systems and processes, identify gaps and needs, and develop elegant solutions.
- Continuing to grow established IS project and data governance practices that engage the community in transparent and inclusive processes to determine how information technology resources should be allocated. The CIO will serve as the public face of Information Services and continue to craft policies and processes to ensure that decision-making is inclusive, efficient, and transparent. They will listen with an open mind to community members' diverse needs and will ensure that their input is considered as new policies are developed. The CIO will also be responsible for informing and educating faculty, staff, students, and community members once decisions are made and ensuring transitions happen smoothly.
- Ensuring data security and mitigating risk across the college. The CIO will play a crucial role in mitigating the institution's risk. They will safeguard the college's information and ensure that critical data and systems are protected from both internal and external threats. The CIO will ensure that processes and policies are regularly updated to reflect best practices in data security, risk management, disaster recovery, and business continuity.
- Growing and refining the structure of the IS division to reflect best practices and support the interdisciplinary and collaborative culture of the unit.

DESIRED QUALITIES AND CHARACTERISTICS

As an executive leader for the college, the Chief Information Officer will be a highly knowledgeable and collaborative professional with a track record of successful organizational and technical leadership within information technology. The CIO will have strong project management skills and intimate knowledge of Workday as an operating system.

The CIO will be an excellent listener and an effective communicator with a commitment to supporting the mission, values, and strategic goals of Rhodes College. The ideal candidate will hold an advanced degree, have experience with IT change management, and bring many of the following complementary skills and experiences to their work:

Strategic Vision:

- Have a sophisticated understanding of the challenges facing residential liberal arts colleges in the 21st century and the ways impactful technology and data can support Rhodes as it further distinguishes itself in the crowded higher education liberal arts landscape (particularly as we learn to navigate the post-pandemic opportunities to teach, research, and work in increasingly diverse ways).
- The ability to formulate, articulate, and implement an innovative strategic vision for the use of information, data, and technology at Rhodes College that advances the educational and operational aims of the institution.
- An understanding of best practices in and strong technical knowledge of a range of IT areas with particular emphasis on the integration of systems in a higher education environment, including process improvement, enterprise management, information security, institutional research, and coordination of academic and administrative priorities through intelligent information and data management.
- Experience setting and achieving long-term strategic goals as well as the temperamental and intellectual agility to respond effectively to urgent items as they arise.
- The ability to plan, negotiate, and strategize sustainable business practices for a complex

information services division with competing stakeholder priorities while keeping the needs of faculty, administrators, staff, and students at the heart of planned outcomes.

Communication:

- Demonstrated communication and listening skills, including an understanding of how and when to solicit input from a wide variety of stakeholders, how to effectively convey both potential solutions and tradeoffs in return, and how to ensure that critical information is relayed broadly, transparently, and proactively across all stakeholder groups.
- The ability to build relationships of trust and shared purpose across a wide range of stakeholders including faculty, students, staff, and administrators.
- The quantitative skills to make data-informed decisions regarding the institution's needs combined with the communication skills to present these findings persuasively to colleagues and stakeholders in a compelling narrative.

Organizational Management:

- Experience managing or being part of a team leading large, complex IT systems change, with strong preference for familiarity with Workday.
- A record of success in recruiting, mentoring, empowering, training, and retaining staff and enabling them to perform to the best of their abilities.
- Experience in organizational management, including assessing staffing, structure, policies, processes, and resource allocation to ensure the optimal functioning of the division.
- A commitment to fostering and maintaining a diverse and inclusive culture that values multiple perspectives and experiences.
- An understanding of the collaborative leadership structure within higher education, the nature of the academic enterprise, and a commitment to the mission, vision, and institutional priorities of Rhodes College.



CANDIDACY PROCESS

The search committee will begin reviewing applications by April 28, 2022. For full consideration, please submit a resume and letter of interest by that date, including a list of references. References will not be called until candidates have been named as finalists for the position. We expect that the start date for this position is fall semester 2022.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Katherine Clay Bassard, Chair of Search Committee:
bassardk@rhodes.edu.

Rhodes College is an equal opportunity employer committed to diversity in the workforce.



Rhodes College