Executive Leadership Academy 2021–2022

A leadership development program to hone the skills of college and university vice presidents and other cabinet officers in preparation for presidencies and other senior-level positions

OPENING SEMINAR: June 24–26, 2021 Washington, DC

CLOSING SEMINAR: June 13–15, 2022 Washington, DC

CIC NOMINATION DEADLINE: Friday, January 22, 2021 5:00 p.m. EST

www.cic.edu/Executive/LeadershipAcademy
Executive Leadership Academy 2021–2022

The Executive Leadership Academy (ELA) is a yearlong program cosponsored by the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC), the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), and the American Academic Leadership Institute (AALI) to prepare experienced provosts and vice presidents to become successful presidents or move to positions of greater responsibility. By completing the program, participants will have acquired considerable knowledge, skills, and experiences that are germane to the portfolio of responsibilities and activities central to the work of a president or other senior-level leader. Participants remain in their current positions during the program.

The Need for Highly Qualified Presidential Candidates

Several issues affect future leadership needs of the academy: the aging of the current generation of presidents; the reports of search consultants that candidate pools in presidential searches are becoming smaller; the increasing complexity of the president’s role; and the reluctance of some boards of trustees to select candidates without prior experience in the full complement of responsibilities of the presidency. Those responsibilities have changed significantly in recent years. The president’s role as well as that of other senior administrators now requires an understanding of all aspects of the institution—from enrollment to endowment management and from governmental to alumni relations—not to mention athletics, fundraising, marketing, student affairs, strategic planning, and financial management. The president’s necessary expertise also has expanded beyond the institutional borders. Candidates with prior knowledge of and experience in the range of responsibilities of the presidency are seen by boards of trustees and search committees as better qualified and better able to assume leadership quickly and to have a positive impact on the institution.

“I wake up every single day excited to have a chance to make a real difference by trying to fulfill our mission, despite all the challenges. Participating in ELA helped me to confirm that this was what I would find a passion for doing.”

—Doug Palmer, ELA 2017–2018, president, Culver-Stockton College; formerly provost at Walsh University
Program Description
The program consists of:
• Two seminars in Washington, DC, (June 24–26, 2021, and June 13–15, 2022) led by current and former presidents and vice presidents as well as experts in key areas;
• Professional Experience Plan (PEP), a highly individualized plan of activities developed by the participant and his or her president designed to fill the “gaps” in the participant’s expertise and experience;
• Mentorship by both the participant’s president and the program director;
• Individualized executive coaching throughout the program;
• Webinars, regional gatherings, and activities developed by participants; and
• Structured conference calls among the participant, mentor, and program director.

Program Leadership
The program director is Linda Bleicken, president of AALI and president emerita of Armstrong State University. Previously, she served as provost and vice president for academic affairs and as vice president for student affairs and enrollment management at Georgia Southern University.

The ELA is supported by the American Academic Leadership Institute and Academic Search.

Participants
Approximately 35 cabinet officers, drawn from all divisions of the institution, will be selected for the 2021–2022 program—half from CIC member institutions and half from AASCU institutions. Individuals who currently serve in cabinet-level positions are eligible.

Program Costs
The program fee for the 2021–2022 academic year is $2,800. The fee includes all program costs as well as meals during the two seminars. The participants or their institutions are responsible for travel and lodging expenses.

With generous support from AALI, CIC will offer a small number of fellowships to enhance the gender, racial, and ethnic diversity of well-prepared leaders of colleges and universities. Preference will be given to nominees from under-resourced institutions that otherwise might be unable to support a participant in the leadership development programs. Nominators should check the box on the nomination form if they wish their nominee to be considered for a fellowship.

“The ELA experience for me was life changing. The opportunities it created to learn from national leaders and to gain friendships for the rest of my professional and personal lives have been unparalleled in my leadership experiences. ELA is definitely for those who want to progress in their leadership experience.”

—Marcheta P. Evans, ELA 2016–2017, president, Bloomfield College; formerly provost and vice president for academic affairs at Our Lady of the Lake University

ELA Results to Date
Since 2009, 100 of the participants in the ten cohorts that have completed the Executive Leadership Academy have been appointed as presidents or chancellors, and many more have advanced to other senior positions.

In addition to the professional advancement of participants, successful outcomes also occur when participants strengthen their leadership in their current positions or when they realize that they do not want to pursue a presidency.
Nomination Procedure

The president to whom the cabinet officer reports must nominate the candidate. Presidents complete the nomination form and commit to serve during 2021–2022 as a mentor and to work with the candidate to arrange experiential opportunities consistent with the program’s content and intent. Individuals who wish to participate should ask the president of their current institution to submit the nomination. The nomination packet should consist of the following items:

- A nomination form, available at www.cic.edu/ExecutiveLeadershipAcademy, completed by the president of the institution, that includes the nominator’s agreement to serve as the nominee’s mentor during the ELA year;
- The nominee’s curriculum vitae;
- A letter of nomination that emphasizes the nominee’s qualifications for the program and potential for assuming a presidency, citing specific strengths and accomplishments of the candidate and addressing the probable career path of the candidate; and
- A statement by the candidate explaining his or her interest in and potential for a presidency or other senior position in higher education. The statement should address the candidate’s strengths, accomplishments, and career plans. It also should address what the candidate has learned thus far about leadership and her or his suitability for a leadership position. What “gaps” exist in the individual’s preparation for a presidency? What talents and skills need further development?

Submit nomination materials as a single, complete packet to www.cic.edu/ExecutiveLeadershipAcademy.

Nomination Deadline

The nomination packet is due by **Friday, January 22, 2021, 5:00 p.m. EST**. Selection of participants will be announced by **February 19, 2021**.

Additional Information

For questions about the nomination process, selection process, or program logistics, contact Kerry Pannell, vice president for academic programs, CIC, at kpannell@cic.ncbe.edu or (202) 466-7230. For questions about program content, contact Linda Bleicken, president, AALI, at linda@americanali.org or (202) 263-7488.

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“The ELA was a wonderful experience, and I would recommend it for anyone considering a presidency. The speakers were uniformly excellent, their presentations were relevant and engaging, and they covered a wonderful range of important topics. The opportunity to network with peers from other colleges and universities made the experience even more powerful and beneficial. The time for focused self-reflection was invaluable. The ELA definitely helped me to clarify my thinking with regard to pursuing a presidency.”

—Mark Biermann, ELA 2018–2019, president, Blackburn College; formerly provost and executive vice president for academic affairs at Valparaiso University and dean of the faculty and vice president for academic affairs at Wartburg College