Senior Leadership Academy 2020–2021

A leadership development program to prepare mid-level administrators for vice presidencies and other senior positions in independent higher education

OPENING SEMINAR: November 6–8, 2020
San Diego, CA

CLOSING SEMINAR: June 17–19, 2021
Washington, DC

NOMINATION DEADLINE: Friday, February 14, 2020, 5:00 p.m. EST

www.cic.edu/SeniorLeadershipAcademy
Senior Leadership Academy 2020–2021

The Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) and the American Academic Leadership Institute (AALI) are pleased to announce the 2020–2021 Senior Leadership Academy (SLA), a yearlong program for mid-level administrators in higher education who aspire to senior leadership positions in independent colleges or universities. 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 college or university vice president or cabinet officer.

The Need for Well-Prepared Leaders

CIC and AALI developed the Senior Leadership Academy in response to presidents and provosts who noted that many talented people on their campuses serving in mid-levels of leadership responsibility would benefit from professional development opportunities to become better prepared to assume senior “line” responsibilities at the vice presidential/cabinet level. The SLA helps to fill the gap in the current leadership pipeline through the preparation of leaders who show promise of developing the talents and skills needed to succeed in a senior leadership position on campus. The SLA also helps participants achieve a better understanding of the broader context within which their own institution operates and a perspective on higher education beyond their current role.

Program Description

The program consists of:

• Two seminars—one in San Diego, California, November 6–8, 2020, and the other in Washington, DC, June 17–19, 2021—led by current presidents, vice presidents, and other senior leaders in higher education as well as experts in key areas;
• Readings concerning areas of leadership responsibilities;
• Professional Experience Plan (PEP), a highly individualized plan of activities developed by the participant and mentor to fill the gaps in the participant’s expertise and experience;
• Mentorship by both the participant’s mentor and the program director;
• Individualized executive coaching throughout the program;
• Webinars, regional gatherings, book groups, campus visits, and other activities developed by participants; and
• Structured consultations among the participants, mentor, and program director.

“The Senior Leadership Academy provided me with invaluable experience as I considered applying for provost positions. The mentorship, camaraderie among participants, and excellent presentations by higher education leaders allowed me to learn important lessons in academic leadership. In particular, there was an emphasis on preparing to apply for ‘the next move,’ and these lessons were pivotal as I applied for provost and president positions.”

—Lily D. McNair, SLA 2010–2011, president, Tuskegee University; formerly provost and vice president for academic affairs, Wagner College, and associate provost of research, Spelman College
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 SLA is generously supported by AALI and Academic Search.

Participants
Up to 40 participants from independent colleges and universities will be selected for the program, which is intended for individuals whose next position most likely would be a cabinet position in academic affairs, student affairs, finance and administration, enrollment management, or advancement and who would like to advance in responsibilities in college administration.

A participant’s current position may be assistant or associate provost, assistant or associate vice president, academic dean, assistant or associate dean, academic division chair, or administrative director. Under certain circumstances, general counsels and faculty senate chairs may be included as well.

Program Costs
The program fee for the 2020–2021 academic year is $2,400. The fee includes all program costs as well as meals during the two seminars. The participant or his or her institution is 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.

SLA RESULTS TO DATE

- Since 2010, nine cohorts have completed the Senior Leadership Academy.
- To date, nearly one-third (31.8 percent) of all participants have experienced career advancement.

“Understanding the chief academic officer role is difficult until one actually steps into the role. The SLA, however, provides insight into the role that not only helps interested faculty and staff members decide if the CAO position fits their professional interests and passions, but also positions them well if they decide to apply for CAO positions. Most importantly, the SLA provides a greater understanding of the many areas of responsibility that the CAO position entails. Finally, the network of colleagues one meets in SLA and continues to see at CIC conferences becomes invaluable.”

—Beth M. Schwartz, SLA 2014–2015, vice president for academic affairs and provost, Heidelberg University; formerly assistant dean, Randolph College
Nomination Procedure

Individuals who wish to participate should ask the president, provost, or a vice president of his or her current institution to submit the nomination. The nomination packet should consist of the following items:

- A nomination form, available at www.cic.edu/SeniorLeadershipAcademy, completed by the nominator. This form should include the nominator’s agreement to serve as the nominee’s mentor during the SLA year.
- The nominee’s curriculum vitae.
- A letter of nomination that emphasizes the nominee’s qualifications for the program and potential for assuming a cabinet-level position. This letter should be specific, citing particular strengths and accomplishments of the candidate. It also should address the probable career path of the candidate.
- A statement by the candidate explaining his or her interest in and potential for a senior administrative 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 his or her suitability for a leadership position. What gaps exist in an individual’s preparation for a cabinet position? What talents and skills need further development?

Submit the nomination materials as a single complete packet to www.cic.edu/SeniorLeadershipAcademy.

Nomination Deadline

The nomination packet is due by Friday, February 14, 2020, 5:00 p.m. EST. Selection of participants will be announced by Friday, March 6, 2020.

Additional Information

For questions about the nomination process, selection process, or program logistics, contact Barbara Hetrick, senior advisor, CIC, at bhetrick@cic.nche.edu or (202) 466-7230. For questions about program content, contact Linda Bleicken, president, AALI, at linda@americanali.org or (202) 263-7488.

“For me, the value of the Senior Leadership Academy lies in three areas. First, the program introduces aspiring administrators to like-minded colleagues, who become friends. Second, it opens doors for aspiring senior leaders to see inside other institutions and learn how colleagues address the challenges and opportunities we are all facing. Finally, the program introduces individuals to the search firms and the search processes that help shape their professional future. It is an invaluable program that helps academic leaders see their institution, their work, and their future with fresh eyes.”

—Erik Ankerberg, SLA 2014–2015, associate vice president of academics, Concordia University Chicago; formerly provost and chief academic officer, Concordia University in Austin, and assistant provost and director of the honors program, Wisconsin Lutheran University