

# SEARCH PROFILE:

## PRESIDENT



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The Board of Trustees at William Peace University has launched the search for the University's next president. Located in the area of North Carolina known as "the Triangle," Peace is a private, liberal arts institution with a distinctive purpose of providing every student with transformational experiences that will prepare them for their future careers and lives.

The next president will inherit a university positioned for growth, building on the strategic foundation established by President Lynn Morton. The campus community demonstrates a strong commitment to student success and takes pride in the distinctive education delivered on its historic downtown Raleigh campus.

The Board of Trustees seeks a strategic, results-oriented leader who will accelerate the university's trajectory and advance its vision. The ideal candidate will leverage existing momentum while building meaningful partnerships with students, faculty, staff, alumni, and the broader Raleigh and North Carolina communities to ensure Peace remains competitive and relevant in today's higher education landscape. The new president is expected to take office on July 1, 2026.



## ABOUT PEACE

William Peace University is a regionally-ranked, award-winning institution in downtown Raleigh, NC, offering cutting-edge majors, immersive learning experiences for all students, and online programs. The recent curriculum revision to an integrated immersive learning format is a key characteristic that defines Peace and differentiates the Peace experience from other universities for both students and their prospective employers.

William Peace University was [founded in 1857](#) as Peace Institute, offering education for boys and girls in primary grades and to women from high school to college. Once a two-year college for women, Peace has evolved into a four-year, coeducational university, offering bachelors degrees in more than 30 majors, minors, and concentrations. Academic offerings include robust online programs, targeting adult students.

Most recently, Peace implemented a four-credit academic model, integrating immersive learning throughout all courses. Additionally, a [new visual identity](#) was launched in 2025 which highlights the Peace focus on innovation and growth but also reaffirming its historic roots.

William Peace University is accredited to award baccalaureate degrees by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), a recognized regional accrediting agency. The most recent reaffirmation was in 2022, therefore the fifth year review is scheduled for 2027 and the next decennial reaffirmation in 2032.

## MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

### MISSION

William Peace University's mission is to prepare students for careers in the organizations of tomorrow. Rooted in the liberal arts tradition, the student develops an appreciation for life-long learning, a focus on meaningful careers, and skills for ethical citizenship.

### VISION

William Peace University will be recognized as a leading metropolitan University in the Southeast, known for its vibrancy, innovative and experiential curriculum, and impact it has on the lives of its students and the greater Raleigh region.

### VALUES

#### Focus on Students

We value our students and are committed to their growth and development as learners and people, leading to successful completion of a degree at William Peace University as well as accomplishment in life.

#### Inclusion & Respect

We are enriched by people of different backgrounds working and learning together, invigorated by open communication in an atmosphere built on respect. We welcome, expect, and encourage the continued pursuit of knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to build a more inclusive community.

#### Commitment to Community

We commit ourselves to create a thriving campus culture that has a positive impact on our community and our world.

#### Creativity & Innovation

We value our students and are committed to their growth and development as learners and people, leading to successful completion of a degree at William Peace University as well as accomplishment in life. We embrace creativity and innovation as drivers of our planning and performance. Both creativity and innovation fashion something new that transcends the ordinary or the typical and transforms those with whom it interacts.

#### Excellence with Integrity

We commit ourselves and our resources to delivering the highest quality in everything we say and do, and we do so openly, honestly, and honorably. We treat students, faculty, staff and all constituents in our community in ways that reflect that commitment to both excellence and integrity.

## NEW OPPORTUNITIES AT PEACE

[Peace Pledge](#) guarantees 100% of a student's tuition is covered for eligible North Carolina students.

[Peace Pathways](#) make a four-year degree affordable and accessible by creating a straightforward transfer process and reduced tuition rate for two-year college students to Peace. The first partner in this program is Wake Technical Community College.

[Peace Produce](#) is a hydroponic farm on the campus of William Peace University. The farm is a partnership with Produce Purpose Inc. and Freight Farms, a hydroponic technology company.

[The Center for Immersive Learning](#) is the hub of activity for the immersive, hands-on, experiential learning that is embedded throughout the curriculum. The Center houses virtual-reality headsets, Go-Pro cameras, CAD technology, and charging stations, for example. Beyond technology and structure, the Center invites industry experts to talk and challenge students, and peer-to-peer tutoring is readily available.





## ACADEMICS

William Peace University's educational approach is applied, adaptive, and nimble—with career preparation built in from start to finish. The immersive curriculum and innovative teaching methods ensure students graduate career ready and prepared to thrive in an ever-changing workforce. Peace serves close to 800 students in 30+ undergraduate and 10 professional online programs in criminal justice, education, business administration, nursing, simulation and game design, and more.

With a historic green campus that's embedded in the heart of downtown Raleigh, the University's culture is as vibrant as the city that surrounds it, and students benefit from all the connection and collaboration that the campus's central location has to offer. Supportive professors, dedicated faculty advisors, and a friendly and active student body allow Peace students to enjoy the advantages of a tight-knit community combined with the multi-faceted opportunities of a growing, flourishing city.

### FACULTY

Seventy percent of all courses, online and in person, are taught by 34 full-time faculty and 74% of these full-time faculty hold terminal degrees. The Board of Trustees eliminated the tenure system at Peace in 2012. Although no tenure system currently exists, the eight faculty who earned tenure at Peace before its removal in 2012 have retained their tenured status.

### DEGREE PROGRAMS

Some of the most popular academic programs are: Simulation and Game Design, Business Administration, RN to BSN, Criminal Justice, Biology and Exercise and Sports Science.

Online programs offered include: Business Administration, Criminal Justice, Education (Elementary Education; Dual Licensure Elementary Education and Special Education as well as Education without Licensure), Human Resource Management, Interdisciplinary Studies, Psychology and RN to BSN.

**Interdisciplinary Arts:** The interdisciplinary arts (IDA) program is tailored for students with a passion for exploring the intersections of visual and performing arts, allowing them to shape their artistic journey and craft a unique identity. In the dynamic landscape of the arts, today's artists are not confined to a single label. This program challenges students to break conventional boundaries, encouraging exploration of intersecting identities while fostering the development of well-rounded artistic personas.

A degree program in Clinical and Behavioral Research was launched this fall (2025) and a User Design Experience program is expected to be launched in Fall of 2026.

For a full list of degree programs, please visit [Degree Programs](#).

### IMMERSIVE LEARNING

Peace students are immersed in active learning where they put knowledge into practice through engaging experiences. This occurs in and out of the classroom, in person and online, and across all disciplines—helping students build critical thinking, collaborative, and problem-solving skills that are further developed through guided reflection before, during, and after each experience. Participation in immersive learning increases students' self-esteem, sense of self-efficacy, motivation, and adaptability. The Peace faculty and staff believe that more students engage with any subject matter in depth—to work and live with it, feel it, understand multiple perspectives, and be guided by faculty—the better they will comprehend it and use that knowledge to inform their careers.

### LOCATION

Students are exposed to the opportunities of the downtown Raleigh location so they are prepared to thrive in an ever-changing world. Meaningful connections with the surrounding community, businesses, and cultural institutions give students access to internships, employment opportunities, and real-world learning experiences in a dynamic urban environment. And the central location of the university enhances Peace's visibility and accessibility, attracting a diverse student body and encouraging community engagement through events, partnerships, and shared resources.

### CAREER PREPARATION

Peace students are prepared to thrive in a professional environment. The well-rounded approach at Peace includes fully integrated internships that give students applied experience in their chosen fields, with professional development options for online students. Mock interviews help build confidence and improve communication skills, while resume and cover letter reviews ensure students present their qualifications effectively. And reflective activities allow students to explore their unique strengths, values, and transferable skills, while networking events and personalized coaching provide comprehensive support, preparing students to transition smoothly from education to employment.

### COMMUNITY

Students are encouraged to develop a network that provides them with support and guidance now and in the future. Through intentionally inclusive spaces, collaborative opportunities, student organizations, campus events, mentorship programs, and shared learning experiences, Peace cultivates a sense of belonging and mutual support. This strong community foundation, which extends across campus and beyond, enhances student well-being, promotes academic success, and prepares students to thrive in diverse environments both during and after their Peace experience.



## STUDENT LIFE

William Peace University is a diverse community of nearly 800 students (704 FTE). Approximately 87% of the current students are North Carolina residents, but 21 total U.S. states and 4 countries are represented. Currently, 82% of first year students live on campus with 377 residential students housed in 6 residence halls on campus and one leased facility off campus. More than one third of the students participate in one of the 15 active student organizations. The total population of students consists of 53 % female, 48 % White (non-Hispanic), 25 % Black and 16 % Hispanic (any race).

### TRADITIONS

In the fall, Peace hosts Pacer Welcome Week (which includes Breakfast with the President and Waterpalooza), Purpose@Peace, Fall Fest, Winter Last Day of Classes (LDOC) Festival and a Late Night Breakfast.

In spring, Peace hosts again a Pacer Welcome Week (which includes Day of Service in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday), Maker's Market, Peace Community 5K, Red Rose Ball, Student Leadership Awards, Spring LDOC, Late Night Breakfast and Senior Week (including Senior Soiree).

### ATHLETICS

Peace participates in NCAA Division III Athletics within the USA South Athletic Conference. Teams include Men's Baseball and Women's Softball as well as Men's and Women's Basketball, Cross Country, Golf, Lacrosse, Soccer, Swimming, Tennis and Volleyball. The athletes compete as Pacers under the school color, Peace Green. Approximately 42% of Peace students are student athletes.



## FINANCES

Current tuition is \$34,530 and Room and Board is an additional \$13,006. Ninety percent of Peace students are awarded financial aid (grants and loans) and the average debt per student at departure (graduation, transfer or stop out) is \$22,000.

The annual operating expense budget is \$29 million and the endowment fair market value (FMV) is \$47.5 million as of June 30, 2025.

Debt service for the university includes \$11.5 million which matures December 14, 2037; \$4.5 million line of credit which matures January 29 of 2026; \$3.5 million construction loan which matures January 31, 2032.

The most recent fundraising campaign, Courageous Confidence, raised \$1,513,870 in cash and pledges in 2022. Funds supported scholarships, internships, buildings & grounds, and Finley Hall. The University is preparing for another campaign in the near future. In September of 2025, Peace announced that alumna Peggy (Garner) Britt '56 made the largest single gift in Peace history, donating \$5 million to benefit scholarships.

## CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION

With deferred maintenance of nearly \$25 million, Peace has implemented a phased plan for needed renovations. Replacement of roof and gutters for the Ross building is expected to be completed in Fall of 2025, funded through operating cash. A much-needed new parking lot with

increased security is in the design and development phase, expected to be completed by August of 2026 and funded through operating cash. Additional proposed maintenance projects estimated at a total cost of \$4.3 million are planned for FY 25-27.







## SENIOR LEADERSHIP

The president has seven direct reports, five of whom are on the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). The five vice presidents on the SLT are Vice President for Academic Affairs, (Interim) Vice President for Administration and Chief Financial Officer, Vice President for Student Life, Vice President for Advancement, and Vice President for Enrollment

Management. The Assistant Vice President for Integrated Marketing and Communications as well as Executive Assistant to the President are the additional two direct reports. All of these leaders are stable with the exception of the Interim Vice President, expected to be filled on a more permanent basis after the new president is hired.

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Bylaws limit the number of Trustees to 27 and there are currently 23 members on the Board of Trustees (BOT) for Peace. The president serves as a non-voting ex-officio member. Standing committees include the Executive Committee, Advancement Committee, Business Operations Committee, Enrollment and Marketing Committee,

Nominating and Governance Committee and Student Experience Committee.

The Board typically meets three times per year, the minimum required by the Bylaws. Trustees serve 3-year terms with a maximum of two consecutive terms.

## LIVING IN THE AREA

The city of Raleigh is adjacent to Research Triangle Park, the largest research park in the United States. The metropolitan area of Raleigh boasts a population of 1.6 million and the city of Raleigh has approximately 500,000 residents.

Research Triangle Park (RTP) occupies 7,000 acres and hosts more than 300 companies and 65,000 workers. The region is named for the geographic triangle formed by three nearby research universities: North Carolina State University, Duke University, and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The three major cities associated with the Triangle are Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill.

The Wall Street Journal recently identified Raleigh as one of the best places for young professionals to launch their careers, despite the tough job market.

In addition to the research and corporate business opportunities in the area, there are numerous restaurants, events and other companies that enhance the quality of life for residents of Raleigh. For additional information, please visit [VisitRaleigh.com](http://VisitRaleigh.com).





## LEADERSHIP AGENDA

The search consultants spent two intensive days on campus, meeting with a wide range of stakeholders to listen, learn, and gain a deeper understanding of Peace. What emerged was a clear picture of an institution positioned for significant growth and impact. Peace has built a solid foundation that creates exceptional opportunities for a visionary leader ready to accelerate progress and elevate the university's profile.

The current president has strategically positioned Peace for its next phase of development. The faculty have recently revitalized and re-invented the general education curriculum to provide immersive learning experiences throughout the curriculum for all students. Staff members demonstrate genuine enthusiasm for serving students and supporting the university's mission. Alumni and current students consistently speak with pride about their experiences and the preparation they received for their post-graduation lives. Board members possess extensive networks and are actively committed to connecting Peace with key community partners. The senior leadership team brings stability, experience, and demonstrated commitment to advancing the institution.

William Peace University has maintained its core identity as a private liberal arts institution while continuously evolving to ensure the education they provide remains relevant to current and future societal needs. This balance of tradition and innovation creates a platform for substantial growth.

### AMPLIFYING IMMERSIVE LEARNING AND INSTITUTIONAL VISIBILITY

Peace has established the infrastructure for transformative education. The next president will have the opportunity to expand this foundation and position Peace as a recognized leader in immersive learning within the region and beyond. The recent rebranding initiative, combined with innovative community partnerships already in development, provides a launching pad for significantly enhancing regional and national awareness of Peace's distinctive offerings.

The university's location in the heart of the Triangle presents unparalleled opportunities for strategic partnerships with business and industry leaders. These relationships can yield substantial benefits: expanded internship opportunities, enhanced employment prospects for graduates, industry input that keeps curriculum current and relevant, and potential funding for academic programs and facilities. Such partnerships will strengthen the immersive learning model while demonstrating clear pathways from education to meaningful careers—a priority for both students and parents.

The renewed emphasis on "Peace" in the university's name and branding opens creative avenues for building institutional recognition and community connections. A



## LEADERSHIP AGENDA (CONT.)

strategic leader will capitalize on this identity to differentiate Peace in a competitive higher education landscape while building meaningful relationships that support long-term sustainability.

### INNOVATIVE ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT AND MARKET EXPANSION

Peace has demonstrated success in creative enrollment strategies through its groundbreaking transfer partnership with Wake Technical Community College, North Carolina's largest community college serving more than 72,000 adults annually. The [Simulation and Game Design](#) program exemplifies how targeted program development, informed by industry needs, can create new pathways for students while addressing workforce demands.

This model presents a template for replication throughout the region. Multiple opportunities exist for similar partnerships with other two-year institutions, creating a pipeline of transfer students while addressing affordability concerns and expanding access to four-year degrees. A strategic president will identify and develop these relationships while exploring additional innovative approaches to student recruitment and retention.

The Peace Pledge program, which guarantees full tuition coverage for eligible North Carolina students, represents a bold commitment to accessibility that can serve as a foundation for expanded enrollment initiatives. Combined with strategic program development and targeted marketing, these efforts position Peace to grow its student body while maintaining its commitment to personalized education.

[Peace Pathways](#) make a four-year degree affordable and accessible by creating a straightforward transfer process and reduced tuition rate for two-year college students to Peace. The first partner in this program is Wake Technical Community College.

### LEVERAGING RELATIONSHIPS FOR INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT

Peace alumni demonstrate genuine passion for their institution, regardless of whether they attended during the two-year or women's college era or as students in the current co-educational four-year university. However, this enthusiasm represents untapped potential. Alumni possess the interest and capacity to contribute meaningfully to Peace's success through financial support, professional networks, internship opportunities, and advocacy within their communities.

Similarly, Board members bring extensive community networks and express genuine readiness to facilitate connections between Peace and potential partners. These relationships can yield collaborations in academic programming, expanded internship and employment opportunities for students, and financial support for strategic initiatives.

Peace's downtown Raleigh location creates natural opportunities for partnerships with nearby institutions and businesses. Such collaborations can enhance academic offerings, provide access to expensive resources, reduce costs through shared services, and expand opportunities for students. The region's robust economy and diverse industry

base offer fertile ground for mutually beneficial partnerships that advance both institutional goals and community needs.

Recent philanthropic success, including the historic \$5 million gift from alumna Peggy (Garner) Britt '56, demonstrates the potential for significant donor engagement. This gift establishes a precedent and creates momentum for expanded fundraising efforts that can support scholarships, academic programs, and facility improvements.

### STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS WITH RESEARCH TRIANGLE INSTITUTIONS

The Research Triangle Park environment provides Peace with unique advantages typically unavailable to institutions of similar size. Proximity to North Carolina State University, Duke University, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill creates opportunities for collaborative relationships that can significantly expand opportunities for both students and faculty.

Cross-registration agreements provide Peace students access to specialized courses and research opportunities while maintaining their connection to a personalized educational environment where faculty and classmates know them individually. Faculty exchange programs and shared research facilities could enhance Peace's academic offerings and provide professional development opportunities for faculty members.

Such partnerships would increase Peace's visibility within the higher education community while demonstrating the value of collaboration over competition. Strategic implementation of these relationships positions Peace as an integral part of the Research Triangle's educational ecosystem while preserving its distinctive identity and mission.

### FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND STRATEGIC INVESTMENT

Peace operates with a clear understanding of its financial realities and has developed practical strategies for addressing immediate needs while building long-term sustainability. The phased approach to facility improvements demonstrates responsible stewardship while acknowledging the importance of maintaining an environment that supports student success and institutional growth.

The next president will inherit a financial foundation that is steadily improving through identified opportunities for revenue enhancement and cost management. Strategic enrollment growth, expanded fundraising capacity, innovative program development, and strategic partnerships all represent pathways to increased financial strength that are currently seeing results. The challenge lies not in identifying opportunities but in prioritizing and implementing initiatives that yield the greatest return on investment while advancing the institution's mission.

Peace's tuition-dependent model creates both challenges and opportunities. The Peace Pledge program and strategic partnerships with community colleges address affordability concerns while creating new revenue streams. A president with experience in innovative financial models will find multiple avenues for building sustainability while maintaining accessibility.





## REQUIRED AND DESIRED LEADERSHIP SKILLS, EXPERIENCES, AND QUALIFICATIONS

The next president will bring a successful track record of leadership experience, including experience in supporting and sustaining a high-performance team; financial management (stewardship, investment, revenue generation, budget oversight, etc.); strategic thinking, planning and action leading to improved organizational performance; and leading innovation and change. An earned terminal degree is preferred. Experience in higher education as well as leadership at the presidential or senior level in higher education or industry is required.

In addition to meeting these requirements, the successful candidate will bring many of the highly valued competencies, experiences, characteristics, and qualifications listed below:

**An outstanding communicator** with strong interpersonal skills, capable of building meaningful relationships and engaging effectively with students, faculty, staff, the Board of Trustees, alumni, donors and the broader Raleigh community. They should also be able to share the story and vision of William Peace University with stakeholders in a truly compelling way and translate the relevance of a liberal arts based higher education to a broader public.

**An approachable, student-centered leader** with a deep understanding of the transformative power of higher education and an appreciation for the liberal arts curriculum while also embracing a concept of the modern, robust, and industry-relevant future for the liberal arts in the United States.

**A leader with financial and business acumen**, experienced in achieving financial sustainability in a heavily tuition-dependent environment. They should be ready to challenge the status quo and make tough decisions when necessary.

**Demonstrated success in fundraising**, including building philanthropic relationships with key groups such as alumni, foundations, community leaders, and businesses, as well as fostering partnerships with community organizations and other institutions.

**A steadfast commitment to the Peace mission** and serving Peace students. Current students represent a variety of socioeconomic, religious and academic backgrounds which is part of the special culture of the campus. All are made to feel welcome.

**A leader with an entrepreneurial mindset** suited to today's global economy and evolving higher education landscape. They should have vision, a record of creativity and innovation in leadership roles and the ability to inspire confidence while navigating change with ability and flexibility.





## APPLICATION PROCEDURES

The William Peace University Presidential Search Committee is being assisted by Academic Search. Applications, nominations, and expressions of interest may be submitted in confidence to [PeacePresident@academicsearch.org](mailto:PeacePresident@academicsearch.org). When submitting a nomination, please include the nominee's name and contact information.

Applications must include a curriculum vitae and a substantive cover letter that addresses the expectations discussed in the leadership agenda. For full consideration, applications must be received by **November 13, 2025**. Prospective candidates may arrange a confidential discussion with the search consultants (Maya Kirkhope or Dr. Margaret Venable) by sending a request to [PeacePresident@academicsearch.org](mailto:PeacePresident@academicsearch.org).

For additional information about William Peace University, please visit <https://peace.edu>.

*William Peace University provides equal employment opportunities (EEO) to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetics, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local laws.*

# ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search is assisting William Peace University in this work. For more than four decades, Academic Search has offered executive search services to higher education institutions, associations, and related organizations. Academic Search was founded by higher education leaders on the principle that we provide the most value to partner institutions by combining best practices with our deep knowledge and experience. Our mission today is to enhance institutional capacity by providing outstanding executive recruitment services, executive coaching, and transition support, in partnership with our parent organization, the American Academic Leadership Institute.

