



Cornell Law School



Position Specification

Dean, Cornell Law School

**Cornell University
Ithaca, New York**

February 2021



POSITION SPECIFICATION

Position	Dean, Cornell Law School
Institution	Cornell University
Location	Ithaca, New York
Reporting Relationship	Provost, Cornell University
Institutional Website	www.lawschool.cornell.edu

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cornell University invites nominations and applications for a visionary and dynamic leader to serve as the Allan R. Tessler Dean of Cornell Law School.

Since its founding in 1887 as Cornell's Department of Law (renamed in 1925 as Cornell Law School), the School has produced numerous groundbreaking advances in legal education and scholarly work. Its history of excellence includes contributions across all fields of legal study, service to the community, and a distinguished record of transcending traditional boundaries. Cornell Law School is a remarkable community of scholars, educators, students, staff, and alumni who are deeply influenced by proud traditions and a set of cherished founding principles. Reporting to the Provost and serving as the Chief Academic Officer of the School, the Dean will set a bold and ambitious vision that builds on its powerful legacy and harnesses the talent and creativity of the community to solidify its position as one of the world's preeminent legal institutions. The Dean will support and inspire a dynamic and accomplished faculty and advance innovative scholarship that addresses the most pressing challenges facing the legal world. Cornell Law School is distinguished by its deep-rooted commitment to outreach and engagement, and the Dean will continue to build partnerships and promote interdisciplinary efforts that serve its global mission of benefiting humanity and society. The School seeks an outstanding scholar and a collegial but decisive leader to propel the institution forward. The Dean must be an exceptional communicator who values diversity and is skillful at building relationships with internal and external partners. The Dean will bring a considerable record of administrative leadership and must possess the ability to represent the School compellingly with a variety of audiences, including alumni and supporters.

INSTITUTIONAL BACKGROUND

CORNELL LAW SCHOOL

Cornell Law School's mission remains that articulated by Cornell President Andrew Dickson White upon the founding of the law school almost 135 years ago: "Our aim is to keep its instruction strong, its standard high, and so to produce ... a fair number of well-trained, large-minded, morally based lawyers in the best sense." The School's commitment is to continue to be recognized as a leader among law schools at combining inspiring theoretical, doctrinal, and experiential teaching with cutting-edge scholarship in a supportive, intellectually rich community, so that graduates can achieve excellence in all facets of the legal profession.

Cornell Law School has over 50 faculty, including 39 tenured and tenure-track faculty (14 with



chaired faculty positions), and 18 clinical professors, six in the Lawyering Program and 12 in clinical courses operating at the local, national, and international level. The Cornell Law School faculty is consistently ranked among the top in the country for scholarly productivity and influence. The faculty has preeminence in many areas, including quantitative and qualitative empirical legal studies, international and comparative law, and robust doctrinal scholarship in core fields. The Clinical Program rose in the most recent *U.S. News* rankings and serves a large portion of the student body, which every year seeks more opportunities for community engagement. Cornell Law School also has 100 staff members who bring years of experience and advanced support to its operations, contributing immensely to the institution's success.

Cornell Law School offers a number of different degrees and programs of study, including: A three-year J.D. degree program (about 200 students per class); a one-year Master of Laws (LL.M.) program (about 90 students); a 3 Plus 3 Program (for Cornell undergraduates); a Master of Laws (LL.M.) in Law, Technology and Entrepreneurship program based at the Cornell Tech campus in NYC; a J.S.D. degree program; an online Master of Science - Legal Studies (M.S.L.S.) program; several international dual degree programs; and a wide array of joint degree programs.

Diversity at Cornell Law School is not new, nor did it happen by chance. The School's inclusive approach dates back to its founder, A. D. White. His egalitarian outlook on education lives on in Cornell Law School's mission to train "lawyers in the best sense." In a letter to the abolitionist Gerrit Smith in 1862, White described his ambition to found a university that would provide instruction "afforded to all-regardless of sex or color." It was not long before White's vision became reality. Cornell Law School's first graduating class included George Washington Fields, who was the only formerly enslaved person to graduate from the University. In 1919, Mary Donlon became the first woman editor-in-chief of a law review anywhere in the United States, decades before any other woman held such a title. The School is proud to continue White's legacy to this day and is one of the most diverse top law schools in the nation. The School ranked very high on *U.S. News and World Report's* "diversity index," which measures the likelihood that students will encounter classmates from racial or ethnic groups other than their own. Cornell Law School's diversity story is still being written. One of the School's ongoing priorities is to provide opportunities for women and minorities, both in our student body and in faculty positions. The School believes the richest learning environment is one in which people from all backgrounds are encouraged to share their perspectives.

More information across the following areas can be found online:

Facts and Statistics: www.lawschool.cornell.edu/about/facts_stats.cfm

History and Timeline: www.lawschool.cornell.edu/about/timeline/index.cfm

Dean's Leadership Team: www.lawschool.cornell.edu/about/administrative-deans.cfm

Centers and Programs: www.lawschool.cornell.edu/academics/centers_programs.cfm

Clinical Program: www.lawschool.cornell.edu/Clinical-Programs/index.cfm

International Programs: www.lawschool.cornell.edu/international/index.cfm

CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Cornell University's extraordinary scholars, educators, students, staff, and alumni are guided by a set of cherished founding principles. Unique among its Ivy League peers, Cornell is a private university with a land-grant mission. It is a world-class research institution known for the breadth and rigor of its curricula, and an academy dedicated to preparing young people to be well-educated and well-rounded citizens of the world. Cornell's faculty, staff, and students believe in the critical



importance of knowledge—both theoretical and applied—as a means of improving the human condition and solving the world's problems. It embraces traditional liberal arts education, practical applications of knowledge, and interdisciplinary and collaborative approaches to research and teaching. It champions free and open intellectual inquiry and expression, treats all individuals with dignity and respect, celebrates difference and diversity, fosters a sense of belonging, and remains open and accessible to all who meet its high academic standards.

The University consists of 15 schools and colleges, four of which receive support from New York State as part of Cornell's land-grant mission. Across the Ithaca campus, the Weill Cornell Medicine campuses in New York City and Qatar, and the Cornell Tech campus in New York City, the University enrolls nearly 15,000 undergraduates and over 8,000 graduate and professional school students. Cornell employs approximately 8,100 staff and 1,600 professorial faculty members in Ithaca and at Cornell Tech, and an additional 5,000 staff and 1,700 faculty members at Weill Cornell Medicine in New York City. The University is governed by a 64-member board of trustees, which includes representatives from the faculty, students, staff, alumni, and New York State.

Cornell's financial condition is strong with a balanced budget, a healthy endowment, and an enviable history of attracting research funds. The operating budget is approximately \$4.8 billion, of which 54 percent supports the Ithaca campus and 46 percent supports Weill Cornell Medicine. The University's investment portfolio is valued at close to \$7.2 billion (as of June 2020).

Ithaca, New York

The natural world of Ithaca is breathtaking. One can easily escape the desk by hiking trails along the gorges, taking dips in waterfalls and lakes, biking on woodland paths, skiing down slopes and across fields, or picnicking in the area's many state parks. Cornell University overlooks Cayuga Lake, and many gorges and waterfalls are just steps from Cornell Law School. Ithaca weather allows for a variety of outdoor activities, ranging from boating, swimming, and hiking in the summer to cross-country skiing and ice skating in the winter. There is no end to the ways one can explore and get active. It is not uncommon to run into colleagues, neighbors, or students at the city's many downtown festivals and public events. Ithaca has more restaurants per capita than New York City, and it attracts diners from all around the world. Ithaca was recognized as one of the "foodiest" towns in the US by *Bon Appetit* Magazine.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Serving as the chief academic and executive officer of Cornell Law School, the Dean is responsible for the future of one of the nation's top law schools. The Dean will set strategic priorities to meet new challenges and shape the way the School approaches legal education in the wake of the changing landscape of legal education and nationwide challenges. The Dean will work with all stakeholders, including faculty, staff, students, alumni, and external partners, to build on the School's strengths and identify and implement new initiatives for continued success.

In setting the strategic priorities for the School, the Dean will embody Cornell's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Recruiting and retaining faculty, staff, and students who represent a wide variety of perspectives, backgrounds, and expertise will be crucial. The Dean will also implement a vision for the School that is fostered by shared governance and a cohesive and collaborative culture. The Dean will also demonstrate transparency and a team-oriented approach that will facilitate an environment where all members of the community are seen and heard.



In addition to internal responsibilities, the Dean will serve as the external face of the School, strengthening its reputation. The Dean will further connections in the national legal market and increase the School's academic and professional partnerships. The Dean will also advocate both internally and externally for the resources to support the School's ambitions by engaging in development and fundraising.

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS

Cornell University seeks a Dean with the vision, integrity, intellect, and interpersonal skills necessary to navigate the changing landscape in top-tier legal education. A J.D. or its equivalent is required, as is a record of distinguished accomplishments warranting appointment as a Professor of Law. While no one candidate will embody every quality, the successful candidate will bring many professional qualifications and personal qualities to the position, including the following:

- Experience as an internationally distinguished scholar
- Demonstrated commitment to, and an uncompromising belief in, legal education and academic excellence
- Communication skills that reflect values of collaboration, empathy, and transparency, as well as an ability to be accessible to faculty, staff, and students as needed
- Demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Record of strategic, collaborative, and creative leadership, both fiscally and in support of educational programs across the curriculum
- Enthusiasm for promoting community-engaged and interdisciplinary experiential teaching
- Respect for shared governance, dialogue, inclusion, and security of status for all
- Ability to passionately communicate the School's strengths and vision and represent Cornell Law School within the University community and to diverse external constituencies, including alumni, donors, bench, bar, and government
- A willingness to build the School's endowment through philanthropy
- Ability to engage with a broad community of practitioners in law, business, and policy
- Ability to recruit and retain a strong and diverse faculty, staff, and student body
- A passion for fostering staff and faculty development

COMPENSATION

Cornell University offers an attractive compensation and benefits package, commensurate with the successful candidate's background and experience.

HOW TO APPLY

Cornell University has retained the services of the executive search firm Korn Ferry to conduct this important search. All inquiries, nominations, and applications (consisting of a full-length curriculum vitae and a letter of interest indicating your motivation to apply for the role and your relevant experience) should be submitted to Korn Ferry at the e-mail address below. For priority consideration, please submit application materials in confidence by **March 10, 2021**.

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Diversity and Inclusion are a part of Cornell University's heritage. We are a recognized employer and educator valuing AA/EEO, Protected Veterans and Individuals with Disabilities. We also recognize a lawful preference in employment practices for Native Americans living on or near Indian reservations. Cornell University is an innovative Ivy League university and a great place to work. Our inclusive community of scholars, students, and staff impart an uncommon sense of larger purpose, and contribute creative ideas to further the university's mission of teaching, discovery, and engagement.