

Vice President & General Counsel
Worcester Polytechnic Institute

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Posted Oct. 29, 2024, set to expire Feb. 25, 2025

Job Title	Vice President & General Counsel
Department	President's Division
Institution	Worcester Polytechnic Institute Worcester, Massachusetts
Date Posted	Oct. 29, 2024
Application Deadline	Open until filled
Position Start Date	Available immediately
Job Categories	Vice-(President/Provost/Chancellor)
Academic Field(s)	Legal University Administration
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JOB TITLE

Vice President & General Counsel

LOCATION

Worcester

DEPARTMENT NAME

President's Division

DIVISION NAME

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Worcester Polytechnic Institute - WPI

JOB DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) seeks an accomplished, creative, values-driven leader with a demonstrated track record of success and visionary leadership to serve as the next Vice President and General Counsel. The General Counsel serves as a thoughtful strategic leader across the university and is a member of the President's cabinet reporting directly to the President of WPI. The General Counsel serves as a confidential advisor to the President, the Board Chair, and the administration on a wide range of legal and policy matters and is responsible for ensuring the highest quality of legal services including managing WPI's legal affairs, board governance, enterprise risk management, and institutional insurance functions. This is an on-site position.

JOB DESCRIPTION

As WPI's Chief Legal Officer, the General Counsel:

- Provides guidance on WPI's governance structure, corporation by-laws, organizational structures and decision-making. Creates and updates WPI policies and procedures, the governance responsibilities of members of the WPI community, and the authority of members of the WPI community to act on behalf of the University, including signing authority.
- Is responsible for managing litigation and other disputes to which WPI is a party, including government investigations and enforcement actions, employment disputes, contract and business disputes, and intellectual property disputes.
- Works to prevent litigation and to resolve disputes before legal proceedings commence, whether through informal means or through formal forms of alternative dispute resolutions, such as mediation and arbitration. Responds to and facilitates the production of documents or witnesses in response to subpoenas, legal demands, third-party requests and other legal processes.
- Works closely with WPI's Talent and Inclusion Division and with the Provost, Vice Presidents, Deans and Departments Heads to provide advice on laws, regulations, WPI administrative policies and the Faculty Handbook. This includes support on issues relating to internal investigations, academic freedom and freedom of speech and expression, complaints of discrimination, disability accommodation, leaves of absence, employee and faculty conduct, hirings, collective bargaining and other union matters, separations, wage and hour matters, retirement, immigration, and other issues. Provides legal advice to faculty and staff in conjunction with WPI's educational programs and activities, facilities use, sponsorship and event agreements, and fee for service activities. Helps develop and present educational training for supervisors and employees on these subjects.
- Advises WPI on a broad range of issues relating to student life, including in the areas of student

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conduct, Title IX compliance, privacy, policy development, residential life, academic affairs, student financial services, admissions, and student activities. Works closely with the Provost, academic deans, student affairs staff, Title IX coordinators, and other administrators to solve problems, prevent and resolve disputes and ensure compliance with relevant laws, regulations and policies impacting student life at WPI. Serves on committees and task forces charged with addressing student issues.

- Provides legal advice and support in connection with research administration and compliance. Works in conjunction with the Office of the Vice President and Vice Provost for Research and Innovation and the Office of Technology Commercialization. Helps ensure compliance with laws, WPI policies and guidelines in the performance of academic research. Areas of practice include sponsored research, industry collaboration, material transfer agreements, licenses, export control and conflicts of interest.
- Offers legal guidance and support for WPI's diverse international initiatives, including negotiating agreements with foreign sponsors and partners, as well as addressing various operational issues related to these activities.
- Engages and oversees outside counsel to represent WPI in connection with administrative proceedings before various government agencies, including the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination and the Office for Civil Rights of the Department of Education.
- Anticipates issues and risks and coordinates risk management activities. Communicates pertinent information to appropriate parties.
- Assists clients in understanding privacy laws, such as FERPA, HIPAA, GDPR, PIPL, as well as WPI's policies and procedures concerning privacy.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS:

- A commitment to higher education and an understanding of the legal issues faced by universities.
- Deep knowledge and experience in employment and higher education laws, policies, and governance matters.
- Good understanding of shared governance, risk management, and compliance.
- Experience in providing counsel on student affairs and academic affairs issues.
- Substantial experience as a practicing attorney in a sophisticated environment such as a large law firm, government agency, university, or non-profit or business corporation.
- Proven success in providing legal guidance in the context of complex organizations and a deeply held commitment to, and belief in, the value of collaborative decision-making.
- Experience in managing controversial and/or high-profile issues.
- Ability to work collaboratively, and to communicate effectively, with multiple and diverse

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constituencies, such as faculty, staff, students, corporate partners, community leaders, the public, alumni, and union leaders.

- Demonstrates diplomacy, patience, and the ability to navigate complex situations professionally and tactfully.
- Demonstrated commitment and contribution to fostering and advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Unquestionable personal and professional integrity, trustworthiness; high ethical standards with a strong commitment to legal ethics exhibited in knowledge, practice, and professional responsibility.
- Exceptional analytical, interpersonal, and written and oral communication skills, as well as sound judgment.
- Hands-on, engaged approach and solution-driven attitude.
- A commitment to the highest standards of excellence.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- Juris Doctor degree from an American Bar Association accredited law school.
- Member in good standing with the Massachusetts Board of Bar Overseers.
- A minimum of 10 years of legal practice with significant leadership experience.
- Experience sitting as the General Counsel or an attorney working in house within a university or as a partner in private law firm with expertise in higher education.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS:

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations and referrals can be made to talent@wpi.edu. All interested candidates should apply (A resume and letter of interest responding to the opportunities and challenges outlined above is required) via WPI's Career page. For the full position profile, please follow this [link](#).

FLSA STATUS

United States of America (Exempt)

WPI is an Equal Opportunity Employer that actively seeks to increase the diversity of its workplace. All qualified candidates will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, veteran status, or disability. It seeks individuals with diverse backgrounds and experiences who will contribute to a culture of creativity, collaboration, inclusion, problem solving, innovation, high

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performance, and change making. It is committed to maintaining a campus environment free of harassment and discrimination.

To apply, visit: https://wpi.wd5.myworkdayjobs.com/en-US/WPI_External_Career_Site/job/Worcester/Vice-President---General-Counsel_R0003002

About WPI

WPI is a vibrant, active, and diverse community of extraordinary students, world-renowned faculty, and state of the art research facilities. At WPI, we have competitive and comprehensive benefits, including health insurance, long-term care, retirement, tuition assistance, flexible spending accounts, work-life balance and much more.

Diversity & Inclusion at WPI

WPI is committed to creating an inclusive workplace where everyone feels valued and respected; a place where every student, faculty and staff member can be themselves, so that they can study, live, and work comfortably, to reach their full potential, and make meaningful contributions in order to meet departmental and institutional goals. WPI thrives on innovative practice and welcomes diverse perspectives, insight, and people from diverse lived experiences, to enhance the community environment and propel the institution to the next level in a competitive, global marketplace.

Contact Information

Please reference Academickeys in your cover letter when applying for or inquiring about this job announcement.

Contact

N/A

Worcester Polytechnic Institute

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