

Position and Candidate Specification



University Ombuds

The Opportunity

As one of the nation's leading public universities, the University of Virginia (UVA) is committed to excellence in teaching, research, and service. UVA is known for its nationally ranked schools and programs, distinguished faculty, and research university status, and for fostering a vibrant learning environment that values collaboration, innovation, and shared governance. In support of these commitments, the University seeks a University Ombuds to serve as an independent, neutral, and confidential resource for members of the UVA community. The University Ombuds plays a critical role in strengthening institutional trust, supporting constructive conflict resolution, and identifying systemic trends—helping the University advance its mission while upholding the highest standards of fairness, integrity, and respect.

The Role and Responsibilities

Operating within the principles of the International Ombuds Association (IOA) and the University of Virginia Ombuds Charter, the University Ombuds Office is a confidential and independent resource available to the university community to address issues in an informal and impartial manner. The Ombuds Office services include individual consultation, helping individuals navigate challenges and explore options, reviewing available informal and formal resolution options, providing conflict management coaching, facilitating conflict resolution in one-on-one and group settings through alternative dispute resolution methods, and educating the community on conflict resolution methods. The University Ombuds Office operates independently of other administrative structures to maintain impartiality and to better ensure confidentiality when collaborating across the university. As the leader of the University Ombuds Office, the University Ombuds provides thoughtful and strategic leadership to ensure the office adheres to the Ombuds principles and serves as a resource to help empower individuals to proactively address their conflict and concerns in a positive, constructive method.

As the designated dispute resolution practitioner for the university and as a practitioner of dispute resolution, the Ombuds serves as one of the university's primary resources to develop, guide and coordinate conflict resolution efforts, and to educate and train others on alternative dispute resolution practices and facilitation skills. To this end, the Ombuds provides an invaluable resource to the university in increasing its collective understanding, development, and use of alternative resolution approaches and practices – both in offering and applying dispute resolution practices to facilitate resolution of specific conflicts, as well to build the competency of others within the university in their understanding and use of alternative resolution in a variety of settings.

The Ombuds leads the [University Ombuds Office](#) and supervises the UVA Health Ombuds (serving faculty, staff and students within UVA Health entities) and the Program Coordinator. The office sits within the Division for Community Engagement and Equal Opportunity (DCEEO), reporting to the AVP for **Equal Opportunity and Civil Rights (EOCR)** for purposes of administrative and budgetary support. Crucially, however, the Ombuds is independent in their work and maintains as confidential all records and information with respect to services provided. While maintaining confidentiality of communications with inquirers, the Ombuds maintains direct lines of communication with university leadership to keep the university informed about the work and any patterns or systemic issues of concern. The [University Ombuds Office Charter](#) affirms the purpose of the office and its privileges, responsibilities and authority.

Key expectations and priorities for the role include:

Consultation and Facilitation

- Actively listen to visitor concerns during confidential consultations and employ a wide variety of problem-solving techniques to assist visitors, including helping to clarify problems, identifying and evaluating options, offering referrals to other resources as necessary, providing conflict management and other forms of coaching.
- Apply essential knowledge of, and experience with, university policies procedures, and related process information, guidelines, state policies and other potentially applicable sources of information in responding to and providing helpful information.
- Engage in informal information gathering when appropriate and only with the visitor's permission before proceeding, if necessary. Lead in-person and virtual informal mediation, facilitated dialogues, shuttle diplomacy and small-group facilitation requests by fostering constructive communication and guiding visitor(s) toward mutually acceptable resolutions; conduct formal mediation intake as requested.

Leadership and Supervision

- Provide strategic and thoughtful leadership to the Ombuds Office personnel.
- Represent the Ombuds Office throughout the university community and serve as a valuable resource to university leadership.
- Lead in the development of goals, strategy, and vision, and identifying priorities for the office.
- Develop staff capacity to work together collaboratively and grow professionally; provide mentorship and guidance.
- Ensure appropriate practices and procedures are in place to meet the needs of the office, to monitor and track utilization and needs of constituents, and to ensure confidentiality is maintained.

Related Responsibilities

- Serve as a resource to the university in formulating, reviewing or modifying policy and procedures, raising issues that might surface as a result of a gap between the stated goals of the institution and actual practice.
- Act as a liaison between individuals or groups and the university's administrative structure, serving as a communicator or informal facilitator, as appropriate, and providing upward feedback.
- Function as a sensor within the university community to identify problems or trends that affect the entire campus or significant parts of the community; if appropriate, recommend possible solutions and ways to address these concerns.
- Maintain active membership in relevant professional associations, such as the International Ombudsman Association, and engage in professional development opportunities.

Ideal Experience and Characteristics

- Master's degree required. Equivalent education and experience may substitute for all minimum qualifications.
- A minimum of five years of relevant experience utilizing alternative dispute resolution practices and skills in resolution of potential conflicts.
- A minimum of five years of professional work experience in areas of conflict resolution, as an Ombuds in a professional workplace, or in a closely related position in a university setting.
- Demonstrated experience leading an Ombuds Office in a large, complex organization, or an equivalent leadership experience.
- Understanding of the Standards of Practice as outlined by the International Ombudsman Association and ability to adhere to those standards.

Preferred Qualifications:

- Master's or other advanced degree or advanced certificate in mediation, other conflict or dispute resolution, organizational psychology, higher education, counseling, or related fields.
- Licensure: IOA CO-OP (Certified Organizational Ombuds Practitioner) certification, OCP-Certified Organizational Ombuds certification or foundational training from IOA (e.g., Foundations of Organizational Ombuds Practice).
- Direct experience and advanced skillset in conflict management, mediation, and/or other alternative dispute resolution practices.
- Knowledge of UVA policies, higher education structures, and applicable legal frameworks.
- Experience working in and understanding the unique environments of a higher education institution.
- Demonstrated ability to be flexible and adaptable, adjusting priorities and approaches as necessary in order to adapt to changing internal and external environments.
- Membership in the International Ombuds Association or commitment to obtain membership.

To Apply or Nominate

UVA Executive Search Group (ESG), an internal search firm at the University of Virginia, is assisting in the recruitment of the University Ombuds. Confidential inquiries and nominations should be directed to ESG Managing Director Nalini Turner at nms3bt@virginia.edu.

To apply, submit a letter of interest describing interest in UVA, entrepreneurship research, teaching, and public engagement, and a CV via [Workday](#). The search will be carried out with full confidentiality. Additional information can be found [here](#).

The University of Virginia is an equal opportunity employer. All interested persons are encouraged to apply, including veterans and individuals with disabilities. Click [here](#) to read more about UVA's commitment to non-discrimination and equal opportunity employment.

University of Virginia

The University of Virginia (UVA) ranks as one of the leading Universities in the nation, pursuing excellence with purpose. A proudly public institution, UVA is consistently ranked among the best universities in the United States for both excellence and value. As a vibrant and student-centric institution animated by the forward-looking spirit of its founder, Thomas Jefferson, UVA serves the Commonwealth of Virginia, the nation, and the world by advancing knowledge and preparing students to be citizen leaders guided by empathy, integrity, and truth.

The Princeton Review ranked UVA as the No. 1 public school for financial aid for the fourth consecutive year. UVA also secured the No. 3 spot as the best value public university and ranked No. 4 for career placement. Recognized for providing exceptional financial aid, health services, and strong alumni networks, UVA continues to deliver outstanding value and support to students. UVA remains one of the few public universities to meet 100% of every undergraduate student's financial need and offers admission to students with no consideration of a family's income. Several schools are among the highest ranked in their fields, and some, including Darden and Law, have received No. 1 national rankings.

UVA brings together a global community of approximately 25,000 students, hailing from virtually every state in the nation and 111 countries. UVA encompasses twelve schools in Charlottesville, as well as the College at Wise, a small, liberal-arts college in Southwest Virginia, and its newest campus in Northern Virginia. The University employs over 32,000 people, including approximately 20,000 academic division faculty and staff, nearly 12,000 UVA Health employees, and faculty and staff at UVA Wise.

The Student Experience

The UVA student experience is unique, punctuated by many distinct aspects of University life: the elegance of the architecture; the Honor System and the resulting community of trust; the Lawn and its residential community for faculty and students; the primacy of student self-governance; the diversity of the student body; the emphasis on service; and the beauty and history of the surrounding area. Founded on long-held values of academic excellence, this experience is also marked by a first-year retention rate of 97% and an undergraduate graduation rate of 94%, among the highest in the country. These dimensions of the student experience – along with many others – shape UVA graduates to be driven, intellectually curious, and community-minded citizens of integrity and purpose. The current student body is made up of more than 16,000 undergraduates and nearly 8,000 graduate and professional students.

A World Treasure: The Academical Village

At the heart of the University is the Academical Village – a UNESCO World Heritage Site. UVA is the only U.S. university with a UNESCO designation, signifying the cultural significance of UVA's Grounds in conjunction with Thomas Jefferson's home, [Monticello](#). Notably, UVA is one of only two UNESCO sites still being used for its original purpose. Today, the original Academical Village continues to bring Jefferson's vision to life every day. The Rotunda – originally the University's library – still serves as the heart of the University. The eastern and western sides of the Lawn retain the unique pavilions and student living quarters as originally sketched. These buildings continue to play a major role in the University's community, housing some of UVA's most honored faculty and student leaders and enabling them to live and learn together.

Leadership

[Scott Beardsley](#), former dean of UVA's Darden, School of Business, was recently appointed the 10th President of the University. The President is advised by the academic Deans and the cabinet. The cabinet includes the Interim Provost, Brie

Gertler, the Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Jennifer “J.J.” Wagner Davis, and Dr. Mitchell Rosner, the Chief Executive Officer for UVA Health and Executive Vice President for Health Affairs for UVA. This leadership team is dedicated to advancing the University’s academic mission, research enterprise, and strategic vision.

UVA Research

The University of Virginia’s world-class research programs advance knowledge and enable discoveries that enrich and improve lives. A Carnegie Research 1 university, UVA has strong partnerships with leading federal and state agencies and some of the world’s largest companies across a wide range of industries. Sponsored research awards in 2024-2025 total \$570 million (excluding any potential adjustments) from all sources, including federal and state agencies, industry, and private foundations. UVA has \$829M in R&D Expenditures in the NSF Herd report, ranking UVA at #48 in the USA in the last cycle. UVA researchers have made hundreds of invention disclosures, and patents issued in recent years. [UVA’s Licensing and Ventures Group](#) helps bring innovative companies and products to the market, making Charlottesville one of the most vibrant venture capital markets in the country. UVA has a large research park located near Charlottesville airport.

Financial Stewardship and Stability

The University has developed an exceptionally strong financial foundation as exhibited by a \$15.5 billion long-term assets under management net position on June 30, 2025, and a consensus triple-A bond rating. The three major rating agencies have noted the University’s excellent reputation; student demand, highly selective admissions, and broad geographic reach; sponsored research prowess; superior wealth and liquidity management; exceptional strategic positioning supported by strong planning, risk management, and ongoing prospects to support programmatic investments; the Medical Center’s prominent clinical reputation and ability to compete for patient care revenue; and remarkable donor support, among other factors. A recently completed capital campaign raised \$6.1 billion.

The \$6.4 billion FY2026 annual budget encompasses the Medical Center (\$3.8 billion), the Academic Division (\$2.5 billion), and the College at Wise (\$78 million). Significant revenue sources for the Academic Division include tuition and fees (34%), externally sponsored programs (22%), endowment distribution (13%), state appropriations (12%), expendable gifts (9%), and sales and services (9%) The University and its associated organization have approximately \$15.5 billion invested in the [University of Virginia Investment Management Company’s \(UVIMCO\)](#) long-term pool as of June 30, 2025, boosted by the long-term performance of UVIMCO, which has achieved a 9.6% return over the past twenty years, compared to a benchmark of 7.5%. In recent years, UVA has transformed significant parts of its operations (HR and Finance) and implemented new cloud-based systems that will enable best-in-class analysis, services, and support in a rapidly changing environment.

Excellence and Opportunity

Now entering its third century, the University of Virginia offers an affordable, world-class education that is consistently ranked among the nation’s best. UVA admits talented students from across the Commonwealth, the nation, and the globe, without consideration of their financial situation. UVA is one of two public universities that has a need-blind admission process that meets 100 percent of admitted students’ demonstrated need. The University offers robust student scholarship support to attract the best and brightest students from all backgrounds, while protecting against excessive student debt.

Global Engagement and Orientation

UVA is a global University with a strategic focus on preparing its students to become globally engaged citizen leaders after graduation and supporting its faculty as they discover solutions to leading global challenges, ranging from mitigating climate change, managing migration, combating infectious diseases, and supporting democracy around the world. The University aims to support at least one global experience for every undergraduate student before graduation, with rapidly expanding study abroad opportunities and increasingly globally oriented curriculum, internships, and programming. In addition, the University continues to grow resources for faculty pursuing global objectives.

The Office of the Vice Provost for Global Affairs shapes and implements the University of Virginia's global strategy, including the development of opportunities for students and faculty to have international experiences in education abroad programs, internships, and globally focused research collaborations. The office leads efforts to grow an official presence in every key region of the world, develops and maintains international academic partnerships, and operates a hub for enhancing globally oriented content in the University's curriculum and programming.

UVA's Global Affairs includes the [Center for Global Health Equity](#), the [Center for Global Inquiry and Innovation](#), [Global Studies](#), and the [International Studies Office](#). The University operates an office based in Shanghai, China, focused on support for education abroad programs, recruitment, and alumni engagement with plans to expand its focus more broadly in east Asia and southeast Asia. Planning is underway to open an office in Cape Town, South Africa, in 2026. Additional planning for an office in India is underway.

University Advancement and the Honor the Future Campaign

University Advancement is the primary driver of constituent engagement and fundraising efforts for UVA. It includes the Health System Development Office and comprises approximately 270 team members. University Advancement is charged with securing philanthropic support for pan-University priorities and strategic initiatives, and several UVA schools and units have established management partnerships with University Advancement for their development efforts. They work in close partnership with the independent foundations and fundraising offices associated with other UVA schools and units to form a holistic enterprise supporting shared strategic goals.

In support of its aspirations to be the best public university in the nation and among the best in the world, the University launched the *Honor the Future* capital campaign with a quiet phase beginning in the summer of 2017, followed by a public launch in October of 2019. UVA set an ambitious goal of \$5 billion with a target completion date of June 30, 2025, which was surpassed eighteen months ahead of target due to the enormous generosity of alumni, parents, and friends. The campaign substantially outpaced its goal, raising a total of \$6.1 billion.

UVA Athletics

UVA has a strong history of athletic success and is committed to developing Cavaliers both academically and athletically. In the academic year ending in 2023, UVA posted a top five finish in the Directors' Cup all-sports rankings for more than 300 NCAA Division I programs, the highest in the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC). In 2024 and 2025, UVA was 12th overall (4th in the ACC). During its storied athletics history (through the summer of 2025), Virginia captured 35 NCAA team national championships, 155 ACC championships, and produced multiple NCAA and ACC individual champions. Most recently, the Cavalier women's swimming and diving program won its fifth consecutive national championship and sent six swimmers to the 2024 Paris Olympic Games. Head coach Todd DeSorbo was Team USA's women's head coach at the Games.

Thirteen UVA athletics programs have been ranked No. 1 in their respective sports at some point in their history. UVA student-athletes have gone on to win Super Bowls, World Cups, NBA Championships, and World Series and have been inducted into multiple national halls of fame.

Academically, UVA ranks among the nation's leaders in the NCAA Graduation Success Rate and Academic Progress Rate (APR) reports, well above national averages.

UVA Health

UVA Health's vision is to be the nation's leading public academic health system and a best place to work — while transforming patient care, research, education, and engagement with the diverse communities it serves. UVA Health is an expansive network comprised of the UVA Medical Center, UVA Community Health (including hospitals in Culpeper, Prince William, Haymarket and a community medical practice), UVA School of Nursing, UVA School of Medicine, University of Virginia Physicians Group, Claude Moore Health Sciences Library, and other strategic partnerships and alliances.

UVA Health has a long and storied history beginning almost two centuries ago. The School of Medicine was founded in 1825, six short years after Thomas Jefferson founded UVA, becoming the 10th medical school in the nation. UVA Health continues to expand at an incredibly rapid rate and to invest significant resources across all missions. Just over the past four years UVA Health has opened a new 84 bed tower, acquired a free-standing ambulatory surgery center, opened a 200,000 square foot orthopedic center, acquired three community hospitals as well as a physicians' organization in Northern Virginia, became the #1 children's hospital in the state, and successfully achieved comprehensive status for its NCI designated cancer center.

UVA | Northern Virginia

Launched as part of UVA's 2030 Great and Good strategic plan, UVA | Northern Virginia's mission is to connect Grounds in Charlottesville with Northern Virginia, and vice versa. UVA reimagined how the academic rigor of Charlottesville could be channeled north to create UVA | Northern Virginia — a knowledge tap of educational programs, research, mentorship, and events to support Northern Virginia working professionals in parallel with their careers. UVA | Northern Virginia is the center point of UVA's efforts to better serve the commonwealth by bringing new and existing academic programs across disciplines and modalities — in-person, online, and hybrid — to Northern Virginia.

UVA | Northern Virginia works across UVA units to promote over 35 degree and non-degree programs for working professionals in the region. Offerings include programs from the Darden School of Business, McIntire School of Commerce, School of Medicine, School of Engineering and Applied Science, School of Architecture, School of Continuing and Professional Studies, School of Data Science, School of Education and Human Development, and the School of Nursing. In addition, UVA | Northern Virginia continues to develop non-degree educational programs with government and corporate partners; highlights include a custom executive education program with Amazon and an open enrollment program for the Department of Defense. The UVA | Northern Virginia Inspire Summer Program, offering in-person and online courses across disciplines such as programming and forensic science, serves local high school students in the Northern Virginia region.

To house these programs, UVA | Northern Virginia built a 55,000-square-foot satellite campus in Fairfax, VA, to serve as the hub of all university activity in the region. UVA | Northern Virginia is led by Dean and CEO, Gregory Fairchild.

About Charlottesville

Located in Central Virginia just east of the Blue Ridge Mountains, and 100 miles south of Washington, D.C., Charlottesville offers stunning natural beauty, thriving art, music, and food culture, and an ever-growing list of things to do. In the span of a single day, you can hike part of the Appalachian trail, attend a concert, enjoy a memorable meal at one of Charlottesville's many celebrated restaurants (we rank among the nation's top 15 places with the most restaurants per capita). You can also stroll the historic Downtown Mall, explore Monticello, tour the Fralin Museum, visit the Jefferson School African American Heritage Center, or enjoy world-class wineries in some of the most beautiful landscapes on the East Coast.

Whatever you do, Charlottesville brings together the best of many worlds, offering the livability and community of a small city with the amenities and cultural attractions of a metropolis. For more information visit www.visitcharlottesville.org/.