



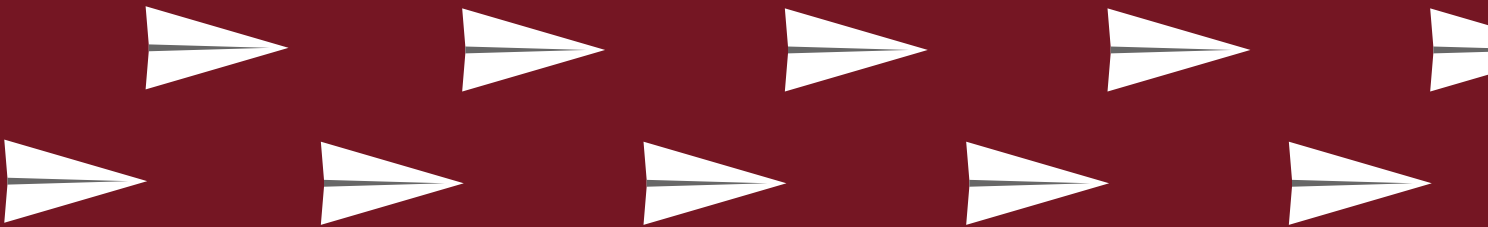
The Council of  
Independent Colleges



AMERICAN ACADEMIC  
LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

# Senior Leadership Academy 2025–26

A leadership development program to prepare  
experienced administrators for provostships,  
vice presidencies, and other senior positions  
in independent higher education



OPENING SEMINAR:  
October 31–November 1, 2025  
Indianapolis, IN

CLOSING SEMINAR:  
June 9–10, 2026  
Washington, DC

NOMINATION DEADLINE:  
Friday, February 14, 2025  
5:00 p.m. ET

[cic.edu/seniorleadershipacademy](https://cic.edu/seniorleadershipacademy)

# Senior Leadership Academy 2025–26

The Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) and the American Academic Leadership Institute (AALI) are pleased to announce the 2025–26 Senior Leadership Academy (SLA), a yearlong program for administrators in higher education who aspire to cabinet-level positions in independent colleges or universities. Participants will acquire knowledge, skills, and experience germane to the responsibilities and activities central to the work of a vice president or cabinet officer.



*“Participating in the SLA was a career altering opportunity. Having the opportunity to learn with colleagues from independent colleges across the country helped me identify and fill in my own professional gaps and bring new ideas back to my campus. I am incredibly grateful to have been chosen for the 2023–24 cohort.”*

Courtney DeMayo Pugno  
SLA 2023–24  
Vice President for Academic Affairs  
and Provost  
Heidelberg University (OH)

## Leaders for a New Era

The SLA fills a gap in the current leadership pipeline by preparing talented leaders with the skills needed to advance to a senior leadership position on campus. The SLA also helps participants broaden their understanding of the higher education ecosystem and of the full range of leadership roles needed for institutional success.

## Program

The program consists of:

- Two seminars—one in Indianapolis, IN, **October 31–November 1, 2025**; and the other in Washington, DC, **June 9–10, 2026**—led by current presidents, vice presidents, and other senior leaders in higher education as well as experts in key areas;
- Readings in leadership theory and practice;
- A highly individualized Professional Experience Plan (PEP) designed to fill “gaps” in the participant’s expertise and experience;
- Mentorship by both the participant’s campus mentor and the program director;
- Individualized executive coaching throughout the program;
- Webinars, regional gatherings, book groups, campus visits, and other activities developed by participants.

## Program Leadership

The program director is Javier Cevallos, president of AALI and president emeritus of Framingham State University (MA).

## Participants

The program is intended for individuals whose next position would likely be a cabinet position in academic affairs, student affairs, finance and administration, enrollment management, or advancement, and whose current position might be assistant or associate provost, assistant or associate vice president, academic dean, assistant or associate dean, academic division chair, or administrative director.

Approximately 40 participants from independent colleges and universities will be selected.

## Costs

The individual program fee for the 2025–26 academic year is \$3,135, which includes all program costs as well as meals during the two seminars. Participants or their institutions are responsible for travel and lodging expenses.

## Fellowships Available

CIC is committed to preparing a diverse new generation of leaders to thrive on today's campuses. Nominators will be expected to explain how the candidacy of their nominee will support this goal. Through generous support from AALI and the Mellon Foundation, CIC is also able to provide a select number of fellowships to support this broad participation. All candidates will be considered for one of these fellowships.



*"The SLA provides the next generation of academic leaders the relevant knowledge and skills needed to lead in higher education today. I feel like the structured mentoring and networking aspects of the program have provided a foundation from which I can build the next steps of my academic career."*

Patrick Archer  
SLA 2023–24

Associate Provost  
St. Ambrose University (IA)



*"Senior Leadership Academy is where you go to spend a year delving into your professional and personal growth. It is a community of learning from other leaders, learning from each other, and learning about yourself. You will leave feeling prepared for your present and future opportunities, and with a network of growth-minded professionals in higher education."*

April Taylor  
SLA 2023–24

Associate Provost  
Logan University (MO)



**The SLA is generously supported by  
AALI and Academic Search.**



*“SLA provided me the opportunity to network and learn from talented leaders and experts in higher education and develop critical skills needed to advance my career and take the next steps in my career journey. Under the well-designed SLA program, I’ve learned and developed more in the last year as an academic administrator and educator than the previous five years combined.”*

Greg Pillar  
SLA 2022–23

Associate Provost for Academic Affairs  
Queens University of Charlotte (NC)

## Nomination Procedure

- All nomination materials must be submitted as a single complete packet on the CIC website at [cic.edu/seniorleadershipacademy](http://cic.edu/seniorleadershipacademy).

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

- A nomination form, available at [cic.edu/seniorleadershipacademy](http://cic.edu/seniorleadershipacademy);
- The nominee’s curriculum vitae;
- A letter of nomination;
- A statement by the candidate explaining his or her interest in and potential for a senior administrative position.

See the website for full details about the nomination process: [cic.edu/seniorleadershipacademy](http://cic.edu/seniorleadershipacademy).

## Nomination Deadline

The nomination packet is due by **Friday, February 14, 2025, 5:00 p.m. ET**. Selection of participants will be announced by **Friday, March 14, 2025**.

## Additional Information

- For questions about the nomination process, contact Marina Esteve Wagstaff at [mwagstaff@cic.edu](mailto:mwagstaff@cic.edu) or (202) 552-8986. For questions about program content, contact Javier Cevallos, president, AALI, at [javier@americanali.org](mailto:javier@americanali.org) or (202) 263-7488.



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