The Opportunity
St. Olaf College seeks a Director of Admissions. This is a new position that unifies programming and management of recruitment staff, activities, operations, and data analysis for first-year, transfer and international students, in an enrollment management framework. The position reports to the Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid in the college’s newly organized division of Enrollment and College Relations, which includes Admissions, Financial Aid, Marketing and Communications, Broadcast Media, Music Organizations, and Special Events.

St. Olaf College
Founded in 1874, St. Olaf enrolls 3,170 students from 54 countries and nearly all 50 states on a beautiful hillside campus in Northfield, Minnesota, 45 minutes south of the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul. The student-faculty ratio is 12:1. The College has an international reputation in music (it awards the BM as well as the BA), and is most highly regarded nationally in the natural sciences and mathematics. It is unusual among liberal arts colleges in offering major study in all four of the fine arts (art and art history, dance, music, and theater). Its distinctive General Education program ensures breadth of study without an onerous distribution system. Among the college’s distinctive academic strengths are four “Conversation programs,” inaugurated in 1981, which provide integrated sequences of team-taught interdisciplinary seminars. St. Olaf operates on a 4-1-4 calendar; the January “Interim” term allows students to undertake a single course of intensive study. St. Olaf was a pioneer in international study, with study abroad relationships extending back more than a century. Over 75 percent of all St. Olaf graduates have studied off-campus.

St. Olaf has had five Rhodes Scholars and 29 Goldwater Scholars since 1995. In 2012, nine St. Olaf seniors were named Fulbright Scholars, and the College is second among its peers in current Peace Corps volunteers, with twenty-four alumni serving overseas. The College consistently ranks among the most successful institutions in preparing undergraduates for medical school; it also ranks highly in the number of its alumni who earn PhD’s.

St. Olaf shares Northfield, Minnesota with Carleton College. Nearly equal numbers of faculty and staff of both institutions live locally or commute from the Twin Cities. Downtown Northfield has been restored to its nineteenth century appearance, with coffeehouses, restaurants, art galleries and the newly renovated (2011) Archer House River Inn. The 850-acre Cannon River Wilderness Area, with its hiking trails and campsites, extends from Faribault to five miles south of Northfield. The Northfield Lines Metro Express provides motor coach transportation between Carleton, St. Olaf and multiple Twin Cities stops, including the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport.

The Enrollment Context
Applications have grown from about 3,000 in 2006 to 4,181 in 2011, before dropping back below 4,000 in 2012. The admit rate has dropped from 68 percent in 2006 to 53 percent this past year, but ticked up again this year. The yield rate has averaged 34.6 percent over the past six years. The past three years have produced both the six-year high (36.8 percent in 2010 and 37.9 percent in 2012) and the six-year low (33.5 percent in 2011). The number of students applying Early Decision has increased from 113 in 2006 to 365 this year. Increasing and extending the diversity of the student body has been—and remains—a significant institutional priority, with domestic multicultural enrollment rising from 65
students in 2005 (9 percent of the class) to 136 students in 2012 (15 percent of the class, and a peak in the college’s history). With focused effort, international recruitment has grown from three degree-seeking students in 2007 to sixty-three in the class entering Fall 2012.

Gross comprehensive fee revenue has grown from ~ $28.2 million in 2006 to ~ $34.6 million in the current year, while the discount rate has increased from 33.4 percent to 37.9 percent. In the same time period, the average need-based scholarship/grant has grown from $15,586 to $23,067 and the average merit-based scholarship has grown from $8,117 to $12,590. The percentage of students receiving a need-based scholarship/grant has decreased from 65.1 percent of the class in 2006 to 62.7 percent of the class in 2011, and the percentage of students receiving a merit-based scholarship has increased from 18 percent to 22.8 percent in the same time period. The number of full-pay, non-discounted students has ranged from 93, a low (2011) to 153 (a high) in 2008.

While 2012 results won’t be fully known and disseminated for some time, the College had enrollment successes in diversity, international enrollment, and national reach. The discount rate moved up more than anticipated, and that will need to be forcefully addressed.

**Enrollment Milestones**

2. Additional staffing FTE was organized around music recruitment, bringing an Assistant Dean of Admissions fully into the Admissions office.
3. St. Olaf transitioned from a modified rolling admission program (one round of Early Decision, a large round of Early Action and a round of Regular Decision) to a Single Notification program (two rounds of Early Decision and one round of Regular Decision) in 2008.
4. The effort to enroll more full-time, degree-seeking international students prompted the allocation of additional FTE to international recruiting in 2008.
5. The hiring of a senior-level Associate Dean of Admissions for multicultural recruiting in July, 2009 was designed to bring intentional focus and energy to multicultural outreach, programming, and enrollment.
6. The creation of a new Director of Financial Aid position (upgraded from Associate Director) in 2010 brought additional experience to the upper management level in the financial aid office.
7. The Enrollment Division moved to purpose built space in Tomson Hall in December, 2010 bringing both offices into closer proximity with faculty, students and other administrative offices and units.
8. The hiring of a Director of Admissions Campus Programs and Services in August, 2011 provides a unique opportunity to bring together the people and resources to support a vibrant campus visit experience.

The College is seeking an experienced, accomplished, and enthusiastic Director of Admissions to:

Develop a strong and symbiotic relationship with the Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid and the staff so as to provide exceptional performance;
• Develop an annual operations plan that deploys all elements of the recruitment and admissions processes to shape inquiry, applicant, and admit, and enrolled cohorts that meet the College’s strategic enrollment goals;

• Execute and get things done: professionally, operationally, and tactically. The director will:
  
  • Build consensus and a sense of teamwork to create a dynamic, customer-centric and team-oriented staff;

  • Serve as the admissions office’s chief accountability officer, ensuring that the admissions office plans for what it is expected to do, does what it plans, and measures its effectiveness;

  • Communicate frequently with the Dean about trends, issues, and the ongoing status of recruitment efforts and staff;

  • Create processes and procedures for file review in preparation for the Admissions Committee selection process and direct the admission and scholarship review process for all domestic applicants to the college;

  • Collaborate with the Associate Dean of Admissions and Director of Multicultural Recruitment on all admission and scholarship decisions for multicultural applicants (currently about 18 percent of the applicant pool);

  • Collaborate with the Associate Dean of Admissions and Director of International Recruitment on all admission and scholarship decisions for international applicants (currently about 12 percent of the applicant pool);

  • Collaborate with the Associate Dean of Admissions and Fine Arts Liaison and the Assistant Dean of Admissions and Music Admissions Coordinator on all admission and scholarship decisions for applicants with aspirations and talents in the college’s four areas of the arts: art and art history, dance, music, and theater;

  • Collaborate with the Assistant Dean of Admissions and Athletics Liaison to provide a unified and consistent recruitment message, proactive recruitment process, and all admissions decisions for applicants with athletic aspirations;

  • Compile and publish appropriate data to meet external reporting requirements and surveys in consultation with the Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid, the Director of Financial Aid, the Director of Enrollment Information and Research, and personnel in the Office of Institutional Research;

  • Work collaboratively with the Financial Aid office staff to ensure proper training, flow of information, and collaboration between the two offices,
• Plan, direct the execution of, and evaluate a student search program to meet specified goals;

• Provide leadership and oversight for all summer visit programs;

• Provide management and direction of the continued implementation of SLATE, a CRM tool the admissions office adopted in 2011;

• Serve as an enthusiastic and energetic representative of the College through meetings with prospective students and their families, college counselors on campus and throughout the country, and other influential referral sources; and,

• Supervise, manage, and guide ten members of the admissions staff, including hiring, supervising, training, developing, and conducting annual performance evaluations:
  - Admissions Office Manager
  - Seven Assistant Deans of Admissions
  - Two Admissions Officers

Required qualifications: Substantial management experience, exceptional skills, and a strong track record of successful direction of student recruitment, selection, and enrollment programs. The successful candidate will demonstrate polished communication and interpersonal skills, evidence of strong analytic capabilities, and the ability to effectively use data to guide development and evaluation of the operational tactics required to achieve institutional goals.

Required academic qualifications: Baccalaureate degree.

James Day and Carol Stack from Hardwick Day are assisting St. Olaf College with this search. Nominations and expressions of interest should be sent to:

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