Our student body is all-boarding, and more than 90 percent of faculty live on campus, creating an intimate, tight-knit community. We’re an all-boys school, focused on developing young men who are lifelong learners with a strong moral character. One of the school’s defining characteristics is our nearly 120-year-old honor system that is entirely student-run.

Our campus is set on 1,200 acres in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. This is a place where we can focus on teaching and learning without distractions. Students, faculty, and faculty families take full advantage of our safe and beautiful campus, enjoying hiking and biking trails in the woods or the natural beauty of the Rapidan River, which borders our land.

Our culture is based on moral integrity, intellectual thoroughness, a reverence for things sacred, and good sportsmanship. We seek faculty who are passionate about and trained in their discipline — but who are equally committed to working with boys on stage, on the athletic fields, and on dorm. Living and learning at Woodberry don’t just take place inside our classrooms.
Woodberry teachers set high standards for their students. Woodberry Forest runs two daily schedules simultaneously — one for underclassmen and introductory courses, the other for upperclassmen. Classes for underclassmen meet five times a week for forty-five minutes. Classes for upperclassmen generally meet for forty-five minutes on Mondays followed by two ninety-minutes sessions between Tuesday and Saturday. Both this daily schedule and our curriculum emphasize structure and a focus on developing basic skills and study habits during a student’s first two years. Older boys are given more freedom to control their schedule and develop an expertise in topics that interest them. Classes for all students are held on Saturday mornings to allow for shorter days on Tuesdays and Fridays, when athletic teams travel to away games.

“What’s special about a boarding school is the level of relationship that you develop with the boys in so many venues, whether you’re working with them on the baseball field or you have them at the dining room table or you work with them on dorm. That allows the boys to feel more comfortable in your classroom. You’re learning to work with each other and let your guard down, and I think that allows the boys to be more vulnerable and open and not as intimidated in the classroom as they might be. These boys are very willing to try new things.”

Matthew Keating
MATHEMATICS TEACHER, 16 YEARS

BY THE NUMBERS

10
Average class size

6.5
Student to faculty ratio

100+
English essays written by students by graduation — one each week.
Responsibilities for boarding school faculty don’t stop when the school day ends. Faculty serve as coaches, drama directors, or program advisors during two of our three trimesters. If you’ve never coached before, we’ll pair you with an experienced mentor who will help you develop new skills.

“Coach Mills is always willing to help me out. I can ask him about class or soccer at any time, and he never fails to give a thoughtful response and solid advice. It’s a totally different dynamic than my previous day school — the teacher-student relationship is on a whole different level.”

Andrew Jacobs ’18

THE TALON

The Talon, Woodberry’s student-led literary arts magazine, is frequently recognized as one of the best in the country, taking home top awards from the Columbia Scholastic Press Association. Student editors review prose, poetry, art, and photography submissions, edit the pieces, and lay out the magazine.
Advising
All Woodberry faculty serve as advisors to a small group of students and serve as the first point of contact for parents and students when a boy is facing a personal or academic challenge. Advisors eat a family-style, coat-and-tie dinner with these students once a week before chapel. You’ll get to know these students very well and will find these relationships to be some of the most important you form at Woodberry.

Duty
All faculty are on duty slightly less than once a week. During duty days you will spend time on dorm, particularly to ensure study hall periods are used well. This time on dorm is a great way to get to know students outside of the classroom, whether you’re stopping to chat before lights out, helping with homework, or watching TV with boys in the common room.

Woodberry Cup
The Woodberry Cup is a new school tradition designed to foster relationships between boys across grade levels. Faculty and students are placed on one of eight teams and remain with that team throughout their time at the school. Cup competitions occur throughout the year in athletics, academics, arts, and service. There are also chances for members of a cup team to socialize and build friendships with each other.

The Honor System
A pillar of Woodberry’s community is the honor system. Each spring the headmaster, after a student vote and faculty discussion, selects eighteen seniors as prefects. The prefects are in charge of dorms and collectively administer the honor system. They take this responsibility extraordinarily seriously. Students promise not to lie, cheat, or steal. If found guilty of doing so, they can be dismissed from Woodberry by the headmaster at the recommendation of the prefects. The honor system creates an unusual and priceless sense of trust and respect between the students and faculty. As a teacher, you won’t need to worry about watching over their shoulders during exam periods or worrying that answers are passed around before homework is due.
Whether you live on dorm or elsewhere on campus, working at Woodberry is a demanding job. Between teaching, coaching, and regular “dorm duty,” long days are the norm. But this is also a place where you’ll develop deep friendships with colleagues and students. Your housing and meals in our new Terry Dining Hall, which opened in 2015, are part of your compensation.

The campus is truly idyllic. Faculty and their families enjoy access to a pool, two gymnasiums, squash and tennis courts, and a nine-hole golf course. Faculty children roam free with their friends, wandering from the athletic fields to the river and back to the dining hall without their parents worrying about their safety. If you have children, they’re sure to find close friends among the other children on campus.

Woodberry is in a rural location. The town of Orange, about ten minutes away, has a pharmacy, grocery store, and a few restaurants. Culpeper, a larger town, is twenty minutes away and has a small hospital, as well as more extensive shopping and dining options. Charlottesville, home to the University of Virginia, is forty-five minutes from campus. Washington, DC, is between ninety minutes and two hours away, depending on traffic and where in the DC area you’re headed.

“I moved to Woodberry from Washington, DC, in 2011. Living on campus at a boarding school is a completely unique experience. After moving to Woodberry, I was able to continue my career in marketing and communications through a commuting/telecommuting combination. I became a full-time MBA student at UVa’s Darden School of Business before returning to my company. Working from our dorm apartment has its perks, including getting to grab lunch with my husband, Ryan, or walking our dog to clear my head. I also use local restaurants with WiFi in Culpeper, Orange, or Charlottesville when I need a change of scenery.

One of the things I have heard from other spouses at Woodberry is that it is a wonderful place to raise a child. I am just getting to experience that, as we recently had our first child, Luke. Luke and I enjoy getting to join Ryan for seated meals during the school year, and I enjoy Luke’s connection to the Woodberry boys. Our advisees have labeled themselves “Luke’s uncles,” and I appreciate their interactions with him. While Ryan may not always be available in the evenings for bedtime routine or bath time, the fact that we live where Ryan works allows for more involvement than a typical nine-to-five job would probably allow. Ryan can stop by in between classes, or we can have lunch with him, and he is home right after practice, not losing time on a commute. I try not to overlook these subtle advantages when things get busy here.”

Mandy Alexander
Woodberry seeks teachers who will be lifelong learners. Faculty can apply for financial support from the school if they wish to pursue graduate degrees. Woodberry also pairs new teachers with experienced mentors, with additional support provided by the department chair and the dean of faculty.

The Walter William Craigie Teaching Endowment
Established in 1983 by Helen and Walter W. Craigie, Sr. ‘22, and supported by their son, the late trustee Walter W. Craigie, Jr. ‘48, this program supports the pursuit of graduate degrees by members of the faculty. Current Craigie Scholars include:

Ryan Alexander, English: MA in English at Middlebury College
Greg Guldin, Chemistry: MA in independent school leadership at Columbia University
Curtis Phillips, Academic Dean, Physics: Courses in educational psychology at the University of Virginia
Alex Tisch, Physics: Graduated July 2016 with MS in science education at Montana State University

HOW WILL WE SUPPORT YOU?

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STRATEGIC PLAN

Last year Woodberry began a strategic planning process that is focused on providing our boys what they will need for success in the future. The plan is divided into five strategic imperatives:

1. Comprehensive program review: Faculty committees are studying our academic, athletic, and artistic offerings, as well as summer programs and our “second curriculum,” which includes dorm and advisory life.

2. Financial aid and financial stability: Woodberry wishes to expand its already large financial aid program while ensuring it carefully uses all currently available financial resources.

3. Investment in faculty and staff: We are reviewing how we recruit, retain, and compensate faculty to ensure we hire world-class educators. Pay, housing, and benefits are being carefully studied.

4. Revitalization of the Walker Building: The only infrastructure-focused part of the strategic plan aims to renew our school’s largest building, ensuring it remains at the heart of the student experience. This imperative also involves creating a twenty-first-century library and learning commons in the Walker Building.

5. The Woodberry Experience: We seek to develop a program that gives fifth- and sixth-form (junior and senior) students greater independence and responsibility, both for their education and for leadership on campus.
Matthew C. Boesen
Matthew C. Boesen is Woodberry’s dean of faculty. Before assuming that role in 2015, he was a member of the history department for fourteen years. He previously taught for three years at Phillips Exeter Academy. Matt earned an AB from Yale University and an MA and PhD from the University of Virginia.

Byron C. Hulsey
Byron C. Hulsey became the school’s ninth headmaster in 2014. He graduated from Woodberry in 1986 and was senior prefect. He was a Jefferson Scholar at the University of Virginia, where he studied history. He taught for two years at Bryanston School, a boarding school in Blandford, England, before returning to his native Texas to earn MA and PhD degrees from the University of Texas at Austin as a Patterson-Banister Fellow in American History. Byron served on the Woodberry faculty from 1998 to 2000 as assistant director of college counseling and in the history department. He was assistant headmaster at Norfolk Academy and was head of school at Randolph School in Huntsville, Alabama, for eight years before returning to Woodberry.

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