



Carol T. Christ 10th President of Smith College



An esteemed scholar of English literature and a recognized leader in higher education, Carol T. Christ is the 10th president of Smith College.

Christ came to Smith in 2002 following a 30-year career in teaching and administration at the University of California, Berkeley, which culminated in her appointment as executive vice chancellor, the university's top academic officer.

At Smith, Christ has led a comprehensive strategic planning process to identify the distinctive intellectual traditions of the Smith curriculum and to develop students' essential capacities. *The Smith Design for Learning: A Plan to Reimagine a Liberal Arts Education* identifies priority areas—among them, international studies, environmental sustainability, and community engagement—for significant investment over the coming decade. The product of two years of intensive work and the engagement of thousands of alumnae, faculty, staff and students, *The Smith Design* underscores Smith's mission to “educate women of promise for lives of distinction.”

Under Christ's leadership, Smith undertook one of the most ambitious capital projects in the college's history: Ford Hall, a state-of-the-art, sustainably designed classroom and laboratory facility named in recognition of its lead donor, the Ford Motor Company Fund. Opened in fall 2009, Ford Hall is home to the college's pioneering Picker Engineering Program as well as the departments of molecular biology, chemistry, biochemistry and computer science.

In 2010, Christ launched The Futures Initiative, a year-long strategic-thinking project focused on 2020 and beyond, which examined the college's academic and financial models in the context of trends in higher education. Participants—trustees, faculty and senior campus leaders—engaged questions of demographics, globalization, pre- and post-college education, and diverse pathways toward an undergraduate degree, with the aim of positioning Smith for long-term success.

Over the decade of Christ's leadership, the student body has become notably more diverse and international, reflecting a commitment to educating students who are prepared to assume leadership roles around the world. Christ has extended Smith's global ties, through partnerships such as Women's Education Worldwide, an organization of women's colleges in 20 countries, and the Women in Public Service Project, a founding partnership of the Department of State and the five leading U.S. women's colleges to train a new generation of women to enter the public sector with the skills and passion to address global challenges. In spring 2012, Smith agreed to serve as the academic planning partner for a new liberal arts university for women, the Asian Women's Leadership University, in Malaysia.

Christ graduated with honors from Douglass College and received her doctorate from Yale University. As president, she has continued to teach, offering seminars on science and literature, and on the arts. In 2004 she was named a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, in recognition of her accomplishments in higher education. In 2007 Yale University Graduate School presented Christ with its highest honor, the Wilbur Lucius Cross Medal, in recognition of her distinguished achievements in scholarship, teaching, academic administration and public service. In 2011 she was awarded an honorary doctoral degree by the American College of Greece for her service to education and public life.