Elizabeth S. Chilton was named president of the University of New Hampshire in May 2024. She will serve as the university's 21st president, effective July 1, 2024, succeeding James W. Dean Jr.

Since 2022, Chilton has served as the inaugural chancellor of Washington State University’s Pullman campus, the system's land-grant flagship. She joined WSU in 2020 as provost and executive vice president of the WSU System, serving as a chief academic officer and overseeing research functions across the six-campus system. Chilton continued in that role while also serving as Pullman’s chancellor for the last two and a half years.

While at WSU, Chilton oversaw the strategic planning process for WSU Pullman, which resulted in the first-ever WSU Pullman strategic plan, now in its implementation phase. She led a system-wide budget redesign and initiated the institution’s first system-wide cluster hire program as well as a faculty salary equity process. She also established a new WSU Pullman organizational structure, including a leadership team and the first Office of Equity and Inclusive Excellence.

A first-generation college student, Chilton has a strong commitment to access and equity in higher education, particularly at public land-grant institutions. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in anthropology, with a specialization in archaeology, at the University at Albany, State University of New York. She then went on to earn her master’s and Ph.D. in anthropology at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

After earning her Ph.D., Chilton went to Harvard University, where she served as an assistant professor and then associate professor, and the curator for the Archeology of Northeastern North America at Harvard’s Peabody Museum.

In 2001, Chilton returned to the University of Massachusetts Amherst where she served as a professor and in a variety of leadership roles, such as anthropology department chair, associate dean for research and programs, and the inaugural associate vice chancellor for research and engagement. In 2017, Chilton was appointed dean of the Harpur College of Arts and Sciences and an anthropology professor at Binghamton University in New York, the most selective research university in the State University of New York system.

Chilton’s academic work focuses on the pre-colonial archaeology of Northeast North America, as well as paleoecology, cultural resource management, heritage studies and materials science. She is the author of dozens of peer-reviewed book chapters and journal articles. She is an avid hiker, kayaker, and canoeist and an enthusiastic choral singer. Her husband, Michael Sugerman, is also an anthropology professor specializing in ancient political economy and the role of ceramic production, trade and exchange in the emergence and maintenance of social complexity and inequality. The couple has an adult son and three lively dogs.