



DAKOTA WESLEYAN  
UNIVERSITY



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*Inviting Applications and Nominations for*

## Vice President of Finance and Administration



**MYERS MCRAE**  
EXECUTIVE SEARCH AND CONSULTING



**Dakota Wesleyan University**, a private liberal arts university in South Dakota, seeks an outstanding leader with exceptional financial, strategic, operational, and interpersonal capabilities to join the University's senior leadership team as **Vice President of Finance and Administration**. The Vice President reports to the President of the university and is a member of the President's Cabinet.



### Mission Statement

As an inclusive educational community, Dakota Wesleyan University provides a transformative learning experience that cultivates enduring intellectual growth, ethically grounded leadership, intentional faith exploration, and meaningful service.

## ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY

**Dakota Wesleyan University** was founded in 1885, in what was then Dakota Territory, by Methodist settlers. Its reputation has expanded worldwide since that humble beginning. Today, the university is home to an inclusive educational community fostering a transformative learning experience that cultivates enduring intellectual growth, ethically grounded leadership, intentional faith exploration, and meaningful service. Furthermore, 99 percent of DWU graduates would recommend the university to a student seeking a quality educational experience.

Over the last decade, DWU has grown in physical size and enrollment. Currently, nearly 900 students are pursuing associate, bachelor's, and master's degrees across the university's three colleges: College of Arts and Humanities; the Donna Starr Christen College of Healthcare, Fitness, and Sciences; and the College of Leadership and Public Service. In addition to unprecedented enrollment growth and successful expansion into adult and online learning, the university has completed more than \$60 million in construction on its facilities, including a new library, new science building, updated residence halls, a new sport and wellness complex, and a new School of Business, Innovation, and Leadership.

Significant changes in academic offerings have complemented this growth. These innovative programs include Learn & Earn that matches motivated students with professional opportunities that allow them to earn certificates leading to a degree and a graduate program that provides individuals in church leadership roles the vital business skills to manage contemporary centers of worship. It also has added programs and majors in emerging fields relevant to the labor force needs of the region.

Throughout its history, the university has remained responsive to the unique needs of its region. Strong programs in teacher education have provided new teachers for school districts. Nursing and allied health programs address the continuing need for healthcare professionals in rural South Dakota. Valuing its historic church relationship, Dakota Wesleyan University has remained true to its Methodist heritage and embraces John Wesley's Christ-centered model of uniting knowledge, reason, and vital faith in curricular and cocurricular activities.

With robust music and theatre programs, a variety of conferences and lecture series, as well as 15 intercollegiate sports, DWU provides cultural, educational, and entertainment opportunities for

all interests. Dakota Wesleyan University also has a beautifully maintained campus and new facilities for student and community use. As in the early years, today's students enjoy an environment where minds are challenged, souls are nourished, friendships are forged, and lives are transformed.

The university offers compelling courses of study in the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, health professions, education, and business. Forty-four full-time faculty members provide instruction, mentoring, and guidance to students. Among the faculty, 80 percent hold a terminal degree, and 52 percent are tenured. The university boasts a student to faculty ratio of 12 to 1.

Dakota Wesleyan also has articulations agreements with Southeast Technical College of Sioux Falls, Northeast Community College of Norfolk, Neb., Western Dakota Tech of Rapid City, S.D., Lake Area Technical College of Watertown, S.D., Missouri Valley College of Marshall, Mo., and a unique partnership with the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine with locations in Virginia, South Carolina, Alabama, and Louisiana.

DWU is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission and the United Methodist University Senate. Individual academic programs are accredited or endorsed by the South Dakota Department of Education, the South Dakota Board of Nursing, the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education, and the International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education.

## Fiscal Affairs

### Budget & Finance

Dakota Wesleyan is financially strong and well-managed. The university has an operating budget of over \$18.5 million with an operating surplus 8 out of the last 10 years. Dakota Wesleyan's operating budget has remained solid despite the financial pressures impacting many small, private colleges. In the last decade, DWU has invested over \$60 million in new facilities and facility upgrades with minimal long-term debt.

The university continues to implement revenue and enrollment diversification strategies to meet the national challenge of the decline in the number of traditional age students.

## Advancement

DWU's Advancement efforts have resulted in an endowment currently valued at \$35 million, an increase of nearly \$15 million during the past decade. With the support of more than 8,400 living alumni, an engaged and dedicated donor base, and an average of 96 percent faculty and staff giving participation rate over the last 10 years, the university has been able to increase scholarships, fund construction, and solidify a healthy financial future. More than \$750,000 is typically raised each year for the Wesleyan Annual Fund.

## Facilities and Construction

The DWU campus comprises 36 buildings on 55-acres. DWU has completed five major building projects in the last six years, investing \$32 million in new facilities and facilities upgrades with minimal long-term debt.

Major building projects have included Dakota Residence Hall, DWU/Avera Sports and Wellness Complex, DWU Black Box Theatre, Glenda K. Corrigan Health Sciences Center, and the School of Business, Innovation and Leadership.

Major building renovations have been made to the Alumni Welcome Center, Allen Residence Hall, Koka Residence Hall, Iron Tiger Weight Room, Innovation Labs, and the cafeteria.





## DWU Values

Our Mission is informed by our four values of learning, leadership, faith, and service. We implement our values as follows:

**Learning:** We prepare students for meaningful careers in the context of a liberal arts education, which fosters adaptability, creative and critical thinking, artistic expression, experiential learning, innovation, collaboration, and a deeper understanding of our global community.

**Leadership:** We challenge all members of our university community to be leaders of character who maximize their strengths in their personal and professional lives. We recognize that students can develop and display leadership skills throughout the entirety of their collegiate experiences.

**Faith:** As an engaged, faith-affirming community, we embrace John Wesley's Christ-centered model of uniting knowledge, reason, and vital faith in curricular and cocurricular activities. We challenge students to examine their own values, while respecting the diversity on campus and throughout the world.

**Service:** We inspire and empower our students, faculty, and staff to make a difference through creative, genuine service. Rooted in our Methodist heritage, service is a natural extension of our nurturing community.

## DWU HIGHLIGHTS

**Best Regional College,  
Best Value School,  
Top 50 Performer on Social Mobility,  
Best Online Master's in Education Program,  
and Best Online MBA Program**  
*U.S. News & World Report*

**Ranked. No.2 for  
Best Colleges in South Dakota**  
*College Consensus*

**Hidden Gem in the Midwest**  
*College Raptor*

**NAIA Champions of Character Five-Star  
Institution**

**Bronze Military Friendly School**

**No. 5 Master's in  
Education Administration**  
*Intelligent.com*





# THE OPPORTUNITY

The **Vice President of Finance and Administration** (VPFA) provides the leadership and strategic vision needed for expert management of the university's financial resources and supervises the day-to-day budget, finance, investment, business, information technology, financial aid, auxiliary services, and facilities operations. This senior officer is a financial expert, a creative strategist, a collaborative partner, and an open communicator who successfully creates client-centered environments that value operational effectiveness.

The VPFA oversees financial and administrative systems and operations, financial data management, and analysis, and develops, refines, and maintains financial systems in the university. Working with faculty and professional staff colleagues on all major issues, this senior administrator builds social capital and common purpose in a diverse community through effective collaboration and information sharing. The VPFA works with the President and Board of Trustees, as well as internal and external organizational constituencies, to provide transparent, accurate, and compliant processes.

## Essential Duties and Responsibilities

- Reports to the President and advises the President on leading the university toward financial stability and sustainability
- Exercises direct responsibility for budgeting, financial reporting and analysis, investments, cash management, debt, risk management, compliance, human resources, and outsourced legal
- Through the President, serves as a source of information and advice to the Board of Trustees
- Works collaboratively with other Vice Presidents, board members, faculty, and other key members of the university community to achieve the university's mission in a financially sustainable way
- Manages the preparation of information regarding all financial and administrative matters and represents the university at a variety of meetings in a variety of settings, specifically meetings of the Board of Trustees, to ensure that accurate information is conveyed, and the university's needs and perspectives are considered
- Responds to requests for information in order to aid University decision-making
- Provides leadership and direction in all areas relating to finance and administration in a manner that ensures efficient and effective provision of services within fiscal guidelines and Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP)
- Prepares and monitors budgets, responds to issues forwarded, and encourages innovation
- Coordinates and fully participates in an annual financial audit performed by an outside entity
- Provides leadership and direction to the employees that he/she supervises, including those in the business office, physical plant, University services (bookstore and central services), financial aid, information technology, and human resources



- Manages the development and implementation of short- and long-range fiscal planning in order to effectively manage all financial resources
- Conducts financial analyses of institutional obligations and resources by fund source, identifies potential sources of additional revenue, and prioritizes needs
- Analyzes proposals (such as new initiatives) to determine both their short- and long-term impact on the University's budget
- Oversees the planning, programming, budgeting, and budget execution process, including soliciting, analyzing, and prioritizing requests, and conducting financial forecasting and analysis regarding tuition or auxiliary services increases and enrollment numbers
- Develops/approves University-wide policies and procedures concerning fiscal, physical, and human resources in order to ensure their optimal and responsible use, accountability, and compliance with University policies and state and federal regulations
- Provides leadership and direction for campus construction projects; maintains, in collaboration with the director of physical plant, a comprehensive list of deferred maintenance projects accompanied by an action plan for budgeting and completion, as well as oversee the development of the Campus Master Plan
- Completes any and all assignments delegated to him or her by the President of the University to a satisfactory degree and within a reasonable time frame
- Provides monthly reports to the President's Cabinet and assists President's Cabinet in developing a university-wide budget
- Performs other duties as assigned

## Supervisory Responsibilities

The VPFA directly supervises the directors of the business office, physical plant, human resources, financial aid, university services (bookstore and central services), and information technology of the University. They will carry out supervisory responsibilities in accordance with the University's policies and applicable laws.

Responsibilities include interviewing, hiring, and training new employees; planning, assigning, and directing work; appraising performance; rewarding and disciplining direct reports; and addressing complaints and resolving problems.

## Performance Evaluation

Performance is to be evaluated by the President of the University with input from the senior leadership team. Basis for performance evaluation may include: a balanced University budget, turnover within the areas that are under his/her supervision, a qualified audit and zero to minimal findings during the annual audit process, the degree to which financial forecasting and analysis are accurate.

With a relatively new President, and innovative campus culture, the University has an opportunity to rethink how it conducts its business. The following challenges and opportunities for the VPFA include:

- Preserving and enhancing a student-focused, collegial culture coupled with a commitment to the institution's United Methodist identity
- Partnering with the President, Senior Leadership, and Board of Trustees to grow enrollment and net tuition revenue and to establish a long-term model of financial sustainability
- Exploring new, creative models of revenue enhancement (e.g., separate legal entities for generating revenue)
- Establishing a budget process that is structured, timely, transparent, and oriented to the future, and building accountability into the process
- Upgrading of information systems and financial reporting to provide timely data to assess performance and improve decision making, including accessibility and use of data analytics
- Ensuring a willingness to take strategic risk, specifically in respect to new program development
- Identifying and implementing operational efficiencies throughout the University, including exploring outsourcing of functions
- Fulfilling the vision and values of the institution both personally and for all areas supervised
- Eliciting positive motivation for the unit and managing conflict well within the area of responsibility
- Providing evidence that the unit is contributing to and helping fulfill the recruiting and retention goals of the University
- Participating in the various reaccreditation processes

## The Ideal Candidate Will Possess:

- Deep expertise in budgeting and financial management
- Track record of improving budgeting and financial management within a complex organization
- Success working collaboratively as a trusted partner with multiple stakeholders
- Record of creating systems characterized by accuracy, timeliness, transparency, and accountability
- Extensive experience as a leader of varied support functions within a complex environment; preference for higher education/complex nonprofit experience
- Experience with modeling and forecasting different choices about the future
- Demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Strong commitment to the mission and values of Dakota Wesleyan University
- Understanding of the culture of a United Methodist institution

### Attributes

- Demonstrates character and integrity
- Demonstrates collaborative style
- Demonstrates willingness to propose difficult decisions
- Models accountability
- Demonstrates commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion with proven experience in equity-driven leadership, management, and operations
- Utilizes analytical approach to examining issues
- Demonstrates skills as an effective negotiator
- Maintains confidentiality as appropriate
- Demonstrates ability to retain objectivity when dealing with issues, such as downsizing, terminating employees, etc.

- Demonstrates capacity to welcome new ideas
- Possesses oral and written communication, organizational, interpersonal, and budget management skills
- Possesses ability to analyze and synthesize data, comprehend numeric concepts, and perform numeric calculations
- Possesses ability to manage diverse operating units and motivate staff for optimal performance

## Qualifications

To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

### Education and/or Experience

- Minimum requirements are a master's degree in business administration, public administration, public accounting, or related field and at least three years of significant and progressively responsible financial administration experience.
- Experience in higher education or nonprofit industry is preferred; CPA certification will be beneficial for this position.

### Other Requirements

- Excellent oral, interpersonal, and written communication skills
- Ability to communicate positively and effectively with all university constituents
- Public speaking skills for presentations to employees, trustees, students, or other university constituents







## Daniel R. Kittle, Ph.D., President

Dr. Daniel R. Kittle began his service as President of Dakota Wesleyan University in March 2022. He came to serve DWU because of a deep commitment to the values of a DWU education—learning, leadership, faith, and service. President Kittle believes those values are the foundation of dynamic education, one that prepares students for successful careers, but also meaningful, interesting, and full lives.

Prior to joining the DWU community, he served as the Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students at Wartburg College, in Waverly, Iowa. He served Wartburg for more than 16 years, starting in Academic Affairs with administrative responsibility for faculty development and community engagement. After serving in that role for three years, Dr. Kittle was promoted to Director of the Center for Community Engagement in 2008. In 2012, he was appointed the Assistant to the President for Strategic Initiatives. He was appointed the Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students in 2015. He continued to be active in the classroom, teaching a first-year seminar each fall

as well as regularly teaching a graduate class at the University of Northern Iowa on the history of higher education in the United States.

Dr. Kittle has a longstanding commitment to service in the community, starting in earnest while serving in Student Affairs at Michigan State University (MSU). While at MSU, he had a unique role whereby his position was jointly supported by the university and the City of East Lansing, charging him with leading efforts to build community between members of both entities.

During his career at Wartburg College, Dr. Kittle was part of a group of community leaders who founded the Bremer County Recovery Coalition, a regional organization that was tasked with disaster relief. Dr. Kittle was elected as the inaugural president and served in that role for over a decade. In 2008, this organization was the long-term recovery committee that led the county's response to, and recovery from, devastating flooding that impacted thousands in the region. In addition, he served as the Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Blue Mountain Project (BMP), an international non-governmental organization dedicated to partnering with the people of the Hagley Gap District of Jamaica to improve health, education, and the economy.

Dr. Kittle earned a B.S. in public relations and political science from Heidelberg University, an M.A. in political science, and a Ph.D. in higher adult learning and education from Michigan State University. He has completed the Foundations of Christian Leadership program through Duke University, and the LECNA Fellows Program Preparation for Senior Leadership.



*Dakota Wesleyan University is an equal opportunity employer and provider.*



*The Corn Palace in Mitchell attracts more than 500,000 visitors annually.*



## Mitchell, South Dakota

Just an hour west of the state's largest city, Sioux Falls, Mitchell, South Dakota, offers the best of small-town living. Restaurants, boutiques, thriving businesses, performing arts, dozens of annual events, an unparalleled outdoor lifestyle, and low traffic volume provides a high quality of life in the city of 15,000 residents. Its location is within minutes of some of the best fishing and upland game hunting in the United States.

Additionally, the cost of living in Mitchell is 20 percent lower than the national average, according to bestplaces.net. To add to those savings, South Dakota does not have a state income tax.

Technology is an important part of the Mitchell economy, with several large employers attached to the telecommunications industry. Rare for city of its size, Mitchell has multiple broadband service providers and offers fiber-to-the-premise to every home and business. In fact, Mitchell was named a Top 7 Intelligent

Community by the Intelligent Community Forum in 2015. This global honor is given to cities of any size who use technology to improve quality of life for all of its citizens. Multiple manufacturing plants employ hundreds, and there is a dynamic service economy that is critical to the economic success of the entire region.

Quality healthcare is readily available. Mitchell has a 67-bed hospital and related facilities, including the Avera Cancer Institute. With more than 800 personnel, it is one of the largest employers in the region, offering 45 medical providers and is an excellent resource to the university for clinical instruction and in the practice of health and wellness through the DWU/Avera Sports and Wellness Complex.

DWU is fortunate to partner with the local two-year public Mitchell Technical College in several degree areas. Mitchell's public K-12 education system, a vital partner to DWU's Department of Education, is award winning, and the city is home to two private schools, John Paul II and Mitchell Christian School.

## Application & Nomination Process

*Confidential inquiries are welcomed, and nominations are invited.*



### Applications

#### 1) Application packet must include:

- A letter of application that addresses the responsibilities and qualifications of the position
- Current résumé
- At least five references with full contact and e-mail information. (*References will not be contacted without applicant's consent.*)

2) **Submit application packet** (preferably as PDFs) to [DWU-VPFA-23@myersmcrac.com](mailto:DWU-VPFA-23@myersmcrac.com) by **April 14, 2023**, for best consideration. Additional information will be requested upon receipt of application. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

### Nominations

**Submit nominations to** [DWU-VPFA-23-nominate@myersmcrac.com](mailto:DWU-VPFA-23-nominate@myersmcrac.com) with complete contact and e-mail information for the individual being nominated.

### Consultant

**Kenny Daugherty**, President of Myers McRae Executive Search and Consulting, and **Dr. Darrel Colson**, Senior Consultant, are assisting Dakota Wesleyan University with this search. **Request a conversation at** [KennyDaugherty@myersmcrac.com](mailto:KennyDaugherty@myersmcrac.com).