



DAKOTA WESLEYAN
UNIVERSITY



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Inviting Applications and Nominations for

Vice President of Finance and Administration

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 beginnings. 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 past decade, DWU has experienced sustained enrollment growth and now serves more than 900 students pursuing associate, bachelor's, and master's degrees across three academic colleges:

- College of Arts and Humanities
- Donna Starr Christen College of Healthcare, Fitness and Sciences
- Ron and Sheilah Gates College of Business, Education and Social Science

This growth has been accompanied by more than \$60 million in facility investment, including a new residence hall, a science center, a sports and wellness complex, a black box theatre and the School of Business, Innovation, and Leadership.

DWU has also expanded its academic portfolio with innovative programs aligned to regional and national needs. These include:

- Practical Church Leadership (PCL), a graduate program equipping church leaders with organizational and financial leadership skills; recently awarded a 5-year grant to expand its reach and impact
- New and growing programs in fields such as Computer Information Systems, Nursing, Music Ministry and Music Management and Marketing.
- Expanded adult, online and graduate education offerings.

The university also has added programs and majors in emerging fields relevant to the economic needs of the region.

True to its historic mission, DWU remains deeply responsive to regional needs. Strong teacher education programs serve school districts across the region, while nursing and allied health programs address persistent workforce shortages in rural South Dakota.

Rooted in its United Methodist heritage, the University embraces John Wesley's Christ-centered integration of knowledge, reason, and vital faith across curricular and co-curricular life. Faith-life is alive on campus.

The Vice President of Finance and Administration would support a vision whereby all members of the DWU community, including faculty, staff, and students, are encouraged and supported in their efforts to live lives of meaning and purpose that are an expression of their vocations.

DWU offers a rich campus experience that includes robust music and theatre programs, public lectures and conferences and sixteen intercollegiate athletic teams. Students learn and live in an environment where minds are challenged, friendships are formed, faith is explored and lives are transformed.

The University employs 45 full-time faculty members with:

- 67% holding terminal degree
- 46% tenured
- A student-to-faculty ratio of 12:1

The University is accredited by the **Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and the University Senate of the United Methodist Church**, with additional program-level accreditations across education, nursing, athletic training, and business.

Dakota Wesleyan also has articulation agreements with Mitchell Technical College of Mitchell, Southeast Technical College of Sioux Falls, S.D., Northeast Community College of Norfolk, Neb., Western Dakota Tech of Rapid City, S.D., Lake Area Technical College of Watertown, S.D., and others.

Fiscal Affairs

Budget & Finance

Dakota Wesleyan University is financially sound, with an operating budget exceeding \$19.7 million. Despite financial pressures facing many small private institutions, DWU has remained stable while investing significantly in facilities with minimal long-term debt. The University continues to pursue enrollment and revenue diversification strategies to address national demographic shifts.

Advancement

DWU recently received the largest single gift in its history—a \$16 million endowment contribution—alongside a complementary \$17 million gift to Mitchell Public Schools, creating a powerful pre-K through graduate education partnership. The University's endowment now stands at approximately **\$71.2 million**, supported by a highly engaged alumni and donor base. These gifts reinforce a momentum whereby DWU is on unshakable financial ground and seeks to live into a bold vision.

Facilities and Construction

The DWU campus comprises thirty-six buildings on 55 acres. During the past few years, DWU has completed five major building projects, including Dakota Residence Hall, DWU/Avera Sports and Wellness Complex, DWU Black Box Theatre, Glenda K. Corrigan Health Science Center, and the School of Business, Innovation and Leadership.

In 2025, DWU was gifted a parcel of 138 acres of native South Dakota prairie approximately 20 miles from campus, complete with a spring-fed creek, native grasses, and rich biodiversity. Known as the Johnson Ancestral Prairie, the land will be used as an educational field site and preserved as natural habitat.



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

Great College to Work For

Chronicle of Higher Education

Top 50 Best Places to Work

Prairie Business Magazine

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)** is an outstanding leader with exceptional financial, strategic, operational and interpersonal capabilities as a member of the University's senior leadership team. They provide the leadership and strategic vision needed for expert management of the University's financial resources, and supervise the day-to-day budget, finance, investment, business, auxiliary services and facilities operations. They are 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; develops, refines, and maintains financial systems within the University; works with faculty and professional staff colleagues on all major issues; builds social capital and common purpose in a diverse community through effective collaboration and information sharing; and works with the President and Board of Trustees, as well as internal and external organizational constituencies, to provide transparent, accurate, and compliant processes.

This is a rare opportunity to join a thriving institution at a moment of momentum, investment, and purpose.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

Reports to the President and advises the President on leading the University toward financial stability and sustainability. Through the President, serves as a source of information and advice to the Board of Trustees.

- Exercises direct responsibility for budgeting, financial reporting and analysis, investments, cash management, debt, risk management, compliance, human resources and outsourced legal services.
- 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 leads the internal functions required for annual fiscal audits performed by outside entities.
- Provides leadership and direction to the employees that they supervise, including those in the business office, physical plant, University services (store and central services), financial aid 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, 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, defined within the Campus Master Plan.
- Completes any and all assignments delegated to them 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.

[View DWU's Strategic Plan here.](#)

Supervisory Responsibilities

The VPFA directly supervises the directors of the business office, physical plant, human resources, financial aid and University services (bookstore and central services). 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.



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.
- Exercises a collaborative style.
- Shows willingness to propose difficult decisions.
- Models accountability.
- Commits to diversity, equity and inclusion with proven experience in equity-driven leadership, management and operations.
- Utilizes an analytical approach to examining issues.
- Performs as an effective negotiator.
- Maintains confidentiality as appropriate.
- Retains objectivity when dealing with issues, such as downsizing, terminating employees, etc.

- Welcomes new ideas.
- Possesses oral and written communication, organizational, interpersonal and budget management skills.
- Can readily analyze and synthesize data, comprehend numeric concepts and perform numeric calculations.
- Shows a strong willingness 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 Bachelor'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. A Master's degree in a related field is preferred.
- Experience in higher education or the nonprofit sector is preferred; CPA certification will be beneficial for this position.

Other Requirements

- Excellent oral, interpersonal and written communication skills with the ability to communicate clearly and effectively with diverse University constituents.
- Ability to prepare and deliver professional presentations to employees and University audiences.





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. Multiple manufacturing plants employ hundreds, and there is a dynamic service economy that is critical to the success of the entire region.

Quality healthcare is readily available. Mitchell has a 25-bed critical access hospital and related facilities with more than 45 medical providers. The Avera system is an excellent resource to the university for clinical instruction and the practice of wellness through the DWU/Avera Sports and wellness complex.

DWU is fortunate to partner with the local 2-year public Mitchell Technical College in several degree areas. Mitchell's public K-12 education system is a vital partner to DWU's Department of Education. The city is also home to two private schools, Saint 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) A letter of application that addresses the responsibilities and qualifications of the position
 - b) Current résumé
 - c) Five references with full contact and e-mail information (*References will not be contacted without applicant's consent.*)
- 2) **Combine letter, résumé, and reference into one PDF document and submit to HR@dwu.edu.** Additional information will be requested upon receipt of application. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

Nominations

Submit nominations to HR@dwu.edu with complete contact and e-mail information for the individual being nominated.