



DAKOTA WESLEYAN
UNIVERSITY



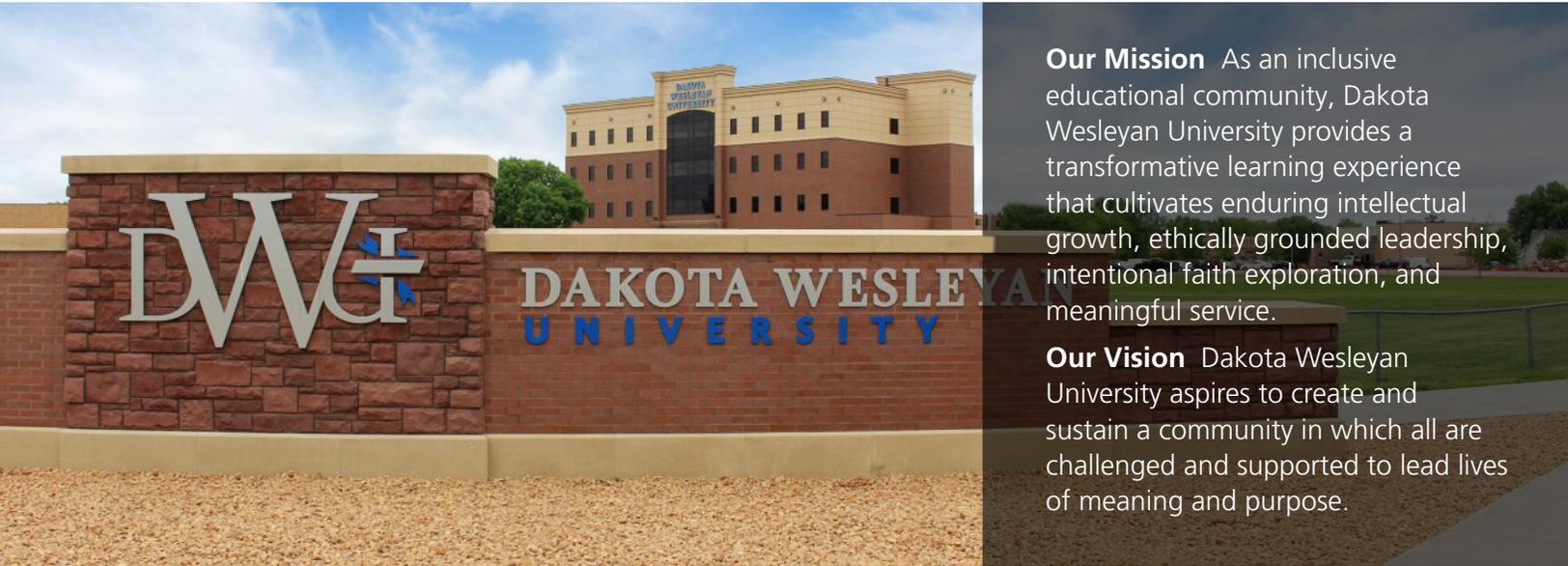
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Inviting Applications and Nominations for

Provost



Dakota Wesleyan University, a private liberal arts university in South Dakota, invites applications and nominations for the position of Provost. The Provost serves as the University's chief academic officer and a key member of the President's Cabinet. We seek an accomplished, relational, and forward-thinking leader with exceptional academic, strategic, operational and interpersonal strengths.



Our Mission 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.

Our Vision Dakota Wesleyan University aspires to create and sustain a community in which all are challenged and supported to lead lives of meaning and purpose.

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY

Dakota Wesleyan University, founded in 1885 by Methodist settlers in what was then Dakota Territory, Dakota Wesleyan University has grown from humble beginnings into a vibrant, mission-driven institution with a national and global reach. Today, DWU is an inclusive learning community dedicated to transformative education—one that cultivates intellectual growth, ethically grounded leadership, intentional faith exploration, and meaningful service. According to recent graduate exit surveys, **93 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. The Kelley Center for Entrepreneurship regularly provides certifications and programs that meet the needs of local managers and leaders.

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 Provost 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.

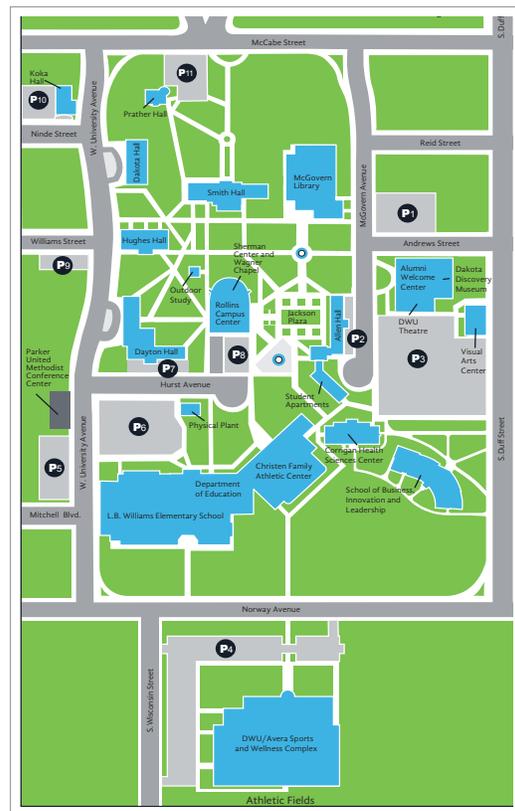
Advancement

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 **\$63.9 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

Dakota Wesleyan University's mission is shaped by four core values:

Learning

DWU prepares students for meaningful careers within a liberal arts framework that emphasizes critical and creative thinking, experiential learning, innovation, collaboration, and global awareness.

Leadership

The University challenges all members of the community to lead with character, integrity, and purpose, recognizing leadership development as central to the collegiate experience.

Faith

As a faith-affirming community, DWU embraces the integration of knowledge, reason, and faith, while encouraging respectful exploration of values and beliefs.

Service

Rooted in its United Methodist tradition, DWU inspires service that is genuine, creative, and transformative—locally and globally.

DWU HIGHLIGHTS

Named one of the 50 Best Places to Work

Prairie 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 **Provost** provides leadership for academic affairs and student life, overseeing the University's three colleges, academic support programs, student life, and campus ministry. Reporting to the President and serving on the President's Cabinet, the Provost collaborates with faculty, staff, trustees, and students to advance DWU's strategic priorities and mission.

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

Primary Duties and Responsibilities

- Provide visionary academic and co-curricular leadership aligned with DWU's mission and strategic plan
- Supervise and support the Academic Deans, Dean of Students, and key academic support leaders
- Partner with the President, Cabinet, and Board of Trustees to advance institutional priorities
- Lead efforts to improve student retention, persistence, and graduation outcomes
- Oversee faculty recruitment, development, evaluation, and support
- Lead assessment, accreditation, and academic policy development
- Advance curricular innovation across traditional, adult, online, and graduate programs
- Provide fiscal oversight for academic and student life budgets
- Serve as (Principal) Designated School Official (P/DSO) for F-1 international students

Expectations and Aspirations

The Provost will be expected to demonstrate strength in:

Faculty Leadership

Fostering a collaborative, innovative, and student-centered faculty culture

Student Learning

Advancing excellence in teaching, learning, and holistic student development

Collaboration

Strengthening shared governance and cross-campus partnerships

Transparency

Communicating clearly and consistently with the campus community

Fiscal Stewardship

Aligning resources with strategic priorities through thoughtful reallocation

Innovation

Supporting DWU's culture of experimentation and responsiveness

Student Life

Valuing residential and co-curricular learning and overseeing key student conduct responsibilities.

Minimum Qualifications

- Earned doctorate from an accredited university
- Record of successful college-level teaching
- Minimum of three years of senior academic administrative experience (Dean, Associate/Assistant Provost, or equivalent)
- Demonstrated commitment to shared governance
- Alignment with the University's United Methodist identity

Other Requirements

- Excellent oral, interpersonal, and written communication skills
- Ability to communicate positively and effectively with all university constituents
- Strong commitment to shared governance and collaborative leadership

Essential Goals

In alignment with DWU's Strategic Plan Wesleyan. On Purpose., the Provost will help lead efforts to:

Enhance
student learning

Improve
student retention and success

Strengthen
student life and campus ministry

Maintain and Sustain
institutional and programmatic accreditations

Expand
health education and other high-demand programs

Lead
a collaborative review of general education

Build
upon strong academic programs

Optimize
academic program mix across learner populations

Sustain
an institutional culture that embraces timely, collaborative, and transparent decision-making, including difficult but necessary choices, in service of current and future students.

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



Application & Nomination Process

Confidential inquiries are welcomed, and nominations are invited.

Applications

Application packet must include:

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

Submit an application packet (preferably as PDFs) to human.resources@dwu.edu, attention Carol Grode-Hanks.

Review of applications will begin March 16, 2026. Additional information will be requested upon receipt of application. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

Nominations

Submit nominations to human.resources@dwu.edu, attention Carol Grode-Hanks, with complete contact and e-mail information for the individual being nominated.





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.

During his first year as President, Dr. Kittle worked with colleagues and constituencies to develop the institution's new strategic plan, *Wesleyan. On Purpose*. Adopted by the Board of Trustees and launched on Founders Day,

April 27, 2023, the plan celebrates Dakota Wesleyan's 140 years of service to students, families, and communities, and embraces the hallmarks of vocational discernment and preparation; diversity, equity, and inclusion; adaptive and innovative programs and opportunities; and attention to the wellbeing of employees. While reinforcing the University's historically strong foundations, the plan's strategic goals will enhance the University's culture of learning and growth, strengthen each learner's success, and responsibly optimize and diversify the student body by improving the capacity of existing programs and generating new growth.

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 central committee that led the county's response to, and recovery from, a devastating flood 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 South Dakota's largest city, Sioux Falls, Mitchell offers the best of small-town living. Restaurants, boutiques, thriving businesses, performing arts, dozens of annual events, an unparalleled outdoor lifestyle, and light traffic provide 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 a city of its size, Mitchell has multiple broadband service providers and offers every home and business fiber-to-the-premise. 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 that use technology to improve quality of life for all citizens. Multiple manufacturing plants employ hundreds, and a dynamic service economy is essential 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.