

# SEARCH PROFILE:

PROVOST AND VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS



FAIRMONT  
UNIVERSITY

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## OPPORTUNITY

Fairmont State University invites inquiries, applications, and nominations for the position of Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. The provost is the senior administrative officer representing academic affairs and reports directly to President Michael Davis. The provost oversees and coordinates all academic degree and certificate programs and is responsible for ensuring compliance with accreditation requirements, advancing scholarly activity, supporting faculty, and growing potential academic opportunities.

The provost works closely with other administrators to support the mission and vision of the institution and will ensure that the newly approved *Strategic Vision* moves successfully forward in the academic area. The selected candidate will be a member of the President's Executive Leadership Team consisting of the Vice Presidents of Student Affairs, Finance and Administration, Enrollment Management, the Director of Athletics, the General Counsel, and the Chief of Staff. The new provost is expected to take office July 1, 2025.



## ABOUT FAIRMONT STATE UNIVERSITY

Fairmont State began its long West Virginia history in 1865-67 as a normal school. It became a State Teachers College from 1931-1944. It had the title of Fairmont State College from 1944-2004 when it then became Fairmont State University. The official motto is "Scholarship, Opportunity, Achievement, and Responsibility."

Fairmont State University is a comprehensive, student-centered, state-supported institution offering numerous certificate and degree programs at the associate, bachelor, and master's degree levels via 41-degree programs and more than 90 fields of study. Located on a charming hilltop campus in Fairmont, West Virginia (Marion County), Fairmont State turns opportunity, passion, and hard work into excellence in a vibrant, close-knit campus community. At Fairmont State, students enjoy the opportunities offered by a large state university combined with the personal attention and campus atmosphere they might expect from a small, private school.

### VISION AND MISSION

#### Vision

Fairmont State University aspires to be a great place to learn, to work, and to call home.

#### Mission

Fairmont State University educates engaged citizens in a community distinguished by opportunity, growth, and achievement, delivering transformational impact for West Virginia and beyond.



## STRATEGIC PLAN

Fairmont State has finished its [Strategic Vision, 2025-2035](#), which centers on making the University a great place to learn, work, and call home. The document was approved by the Board of Governors in October 2024. The *Strategic Vision* incorporates the university vision, mission,

three aspirational goals, and 15 key initiatives. Using this document as a guideline, the University is in the process of creating 11 interconnected three-year implementation plans that will focus on areas like academics, athletics, student affairs, community engagement, and others.

## ACADEMICS

Fairmont State provides more than 90 programs of study offered through the following academic units: [College of Liberal Arts](#), [College of Science and Technology](#), [College of Business and Aviation](#), [College of Education, Health, and Human Performance](#), [College of Nursing](#), [Honors Program](#), and [Graduate Studies](#). In addition, the [Regents Bachelor of Arts](#) program (RBA) is a flexible non-traditional academic program designed for adults and tailored to fit those in need of a degree for career advancement, for those with an associate degree with no corresponding baccalaureate degree available, or for those seeking personal fulfillment. Fairmont also offers dual enrollment courses that provide opportunities for qualified high school students to get a head start in low-cost college courses.

All students benefit from a student-to-faculty ratio of 15:1 with an average class size of 22. More than 90 percent of students receive some form of financial aid. Fairmont State University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). Some programs are also accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP), National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB), and Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN). The WV Higher Education Policy Commission (WVHEPC) provides oversight of new and existing degree programs at Fairmont State University.

## STUDENTS AND STUDENT LIFE

Fairmont State University is home to approximately 3,500 students (2,800 undergraduates, 300 graduate students, and 400 dual enrollment). About 89 percent of the students are from West Virginia. There are about 59 percent female, and 41 percent male, and 14 percent represent diverse student populations.

Athletically, Fairmont competes at the NCAA Division II level as a member of the Mountain East Conference. Approximately 400 Falcon student athletes participate in 17 sports teams including women's acrobatics and tumbling,

women's soccer, men's football, men's baseball, men's wrestling, women's softball, women's volleyball, and dual sports for men and women in basketball, cross-county, golf, swimming, and tennis.

Students also benefit from a variety of campus life activities. Many departments provide extracurricular opportunities. More than 60 various student organizations and clubs are available on campus. Options for students range from student government, professional and honor societies, Greek life, and intramural sports.

## CAMPUS AND FACILITIES

Fairmont State University includes more than 23 buildings throughout their 120-acre campus. Over the past several decades, new construction has included a student union, parking garage, and residence hall, as well as major improvements in infrastructure. These additions have

increased accessibility and the beauty of the campus. Fairmont State also operates the Robert C. Byrd National Aerospace Education Center in Bridgeport (Harrison County).

## FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Fairmont State University has a strong financial standing. For the sixth year in a row, the independent auditor reported that the university closed the fiscal year in strong financial standing. The audit gave the institution an unmodified

opinion, the highest status it can receive. In fiscal 2024 the university had more than \$62 million in operating expenditures. Moody's recently affirmed Fairmont State's A2 credit rating, citing "solid operating performance."

## ABOUT FAIRMONT, WEST VIRGINIA

With a population of approximately 18,000 residents, Fairmont is the county seat of Marion County, where North Central West Virginia's rolling hills meet the thriving I-79 High Tech Corridor. Known as "The Friendly City" for the geniality of the community, Fairmont is a small city surrounded by nature. Nearby, winding, clear rivers cut through the green hills and mountains of Appalachia, giving the area and Fairmont State campus community unrivaled access to the outdoors. Biking, hiking, camping, rafting, climbing, skiing – the region has it all.

Situated only an hour and a half drive from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, a three-hour drive from Columbus, Ohio, and three and a half hours from Washington DC, residents have easy access to metro areas coupled with the advantage of living in a smaller, close-knit community. Fairmont is also close to dozens of cultural and historic areas and state parks.





## LEADERSHIP AGENDA

The provost provides administrative leadership for all academic programs, academic policies, and faculty affairs that affect the academic life of the University as a whole. The Provost Office works closely with the Deans of the Colleges and Graduate Studies and has the responsibility of making final recommendations to the President and Board of Governors concerning the establishment of new academic programs and the appointment, promotion, and tenure of faculty.

The provost also provides support for students and faculty in many areas. This includes overseeing the Academic Pathways program that helps students to discover and explore their interests and select majors. The provost will work with supporting faculty development and overseeing accreditation processes.

The provost serves as liaison to the Personnel, Faculty Development, and Faculty Welfare Committees.

The provost has responsibility and supervision of many areas. Direct reports include the six deans, the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs, Special Projects Analyst, and the Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Initiatives.

Working collaboratively with President Davis and the Executive Leadership Team, the new provost will engage faculty and other campus constituents to build on the strengths and envision new innovative programming and modes of instruction for current and new student populations.

Major leadership agenda priorities include:

- **An adaptable leadership style that focuses on improvement and institutional development.** A critical component of this style of leadership is working with a team to design strategies and evaluate and share outcomes. The provost must ensure compassion, dignity, and respect. The priorities include creating environments that provide academic leadership, supervision, and management. The provost is responsible for the successful operation of all academic areas of the University. This leader will be an advocate for all academic areas with internal and external stakeholders.
- **Effective communication skills with fairness, honesty, and receptivity for diverse perspectives.** The ideal candidate will have transparent communication skills to foster positive collaboration within the faculty, staff, and student populations. The provost will reflect a high degree of energy, passion, initiative, and organization as a listener, speaker, and collaborator. It will require exceptional relationships with the president and other executive leaders to achieve superior communication results.
- **Support student success and engagement.** The provost will foster an atmosphere of acceptance and support for all students, creating a campus environment that appeals to undergraduate and graduate students. It will be important to work with the enrollment team, student life leaders, and the athletic leaders to maximize recruitment and retention.

## REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

The ideal candidate to become the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs will possess:

- A terminal degree and a record of teaching, scholarship, and service commensurate with appointment as a tenured faculty member.
- Progressive experience in positions of increasing responsibility and leadership in higher education.

## DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

In addition to meeting these requirements, the ideal candidate will bring many of the following preferred characteristics, skills, and experiences:

- Ability to accurately define issues, explore options, and find mutually acceptable paths forward.
- Experience with curriculum development and assessment and familiarity with accreditation.
- Understanding the evolving role of technology in higher education.
- Grasp of the higher education landscape and the challenges that Fairmont State could face in the future.
- Commitment to shared governance.
- Budget and grant oversight experience and encourage and engagement to facilitate the pursuit of external funding and other resources.
- Understanding of state systems in higher education.
- Proven record of strategic planning and evaluation.
- Willingness to engage in the community with collaborative relationships.
- Enhance, promote, and support quality scholarly activity and service learning.
- Exhibit a passion for the state, community, and geographic surroundings.







## APPLICATIONS, NOMINATIONS, AND INQUIRIES

Academic Search is partnering with Fairmont State University in this search. Confidential discussions may be arranged by contacting senior consultant, Dr. Pam Balch at [pam.balch@academicsearch.org](mailto:pam.balch@academicsearch.org).

Applications, nominations, and inquiries should be sent to [FairmontStateVPAA@academicsearch.org](mailto:FairmontStateVPAA@academicsearch.org).

To apply, candidates should prepare a letter of interest addressing the leadership agenda and desired qualities and attributes outlined in the search profile. Also required are a current curriculum vitae and a list of five professional references with contact information and a brief explanation of the working relationship with each. All three documents should be submitted in PDF form. The position is open until filled, but only applications received by **March 3, 2025**, will be guaranteed full consideration.

*Fairmont State University does not discriminate against employees, students, or applicants on the basis of race, color, gender, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression/association, national origin, age, height, weight, religion, creed, genetic information, disability, or veteran's status, as identified and defined by law in employment, admissions, and educational programs and activities. Minorities/Women/Veterans/those with disabilities are encouraged to apply. Fairmont State University will not discharge or in any other manner discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because such employee or applicant has inquired about, discussed, or disclosed the compensation of the employee or applicant or another employee or applicant.*

# ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search is assisting Fairmont State University in this work. For more than four decades, Academic Search has offered executive search services to higher education institutions, associations, and related organizations. Academic Search was founded by higher education leaders on the principle that we provide the most value to partner institutions by combining best practices with our deep knowledge and experience. Our mission today is to enhance institutional capacity by providing outstanding executive recruitment services, executive coaching, and transition support, in partnership with our parent organization, the American Academic Leadership Institute.

