

SEARCH PROFILE:

PRESIDENT



MURRAY STATE
UNIVERSITY

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School of Nursing & Health Professions

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Murray State University (MSU) Board of Regents has launched a national search for the University's next President. In partnership with Academic Search, Inc., the committee invites applications and nominations for this opportunity.

For more than 100 years, Murray State University (MSU) has served students from the region, the nation and the world. The University is one of eight public universities supported by the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Founded in 1922, the University has grown from an enrollment of 202 students to more than 10,000 today. Students receive personalized attention from supportive faculty and staff as the University offers a 15.5:1 student-to-faculty ratio. *U.S. News & World Report* has once again included Murray State as one of the best southern regional universities in this year's rankings, marking the University's 34th consecutive year of top tier rankings by the reputable college guide. *U.S. News* has specifically ranked Murray State 1st in Best Value Schools, 7th in Best Colleges for Veterans and 8th in Top Public Schools.

Murray State has also been recognized by the *Wall Street Journal* on the publications' 2025 list of "Best Colleges in the United States" and by *Washington Monthly* as a "Best Bang for the Buck." In addition, *Niche* named Murray State on its 2025 "Best Colleges in Kentucky List" based on factors such as academics, value, faculty engagement with students, campus quality and student life. Murray State University has also been named to the *Colleges of Distinction* 2024-25 "Best Colleges" rankings. Murray State was the only public comprehensive university in Kentucky to receive this recognition.



THE UNIVERSITY

Located in the Jackson Purchase lake area of west Kentucky, Murray State is a state-supported comprehensive university with four academic colleges, two schools and a center:

- Arthur J. Bauernfeind College of Business
- College of Education and Human Services
- College of Humanities and Fine Arts
- Jesse D. Jones College of Science, Engineering and Technology
- Hutson School of Agriculture
- School of Nursing and Health Professions
- Center for Adult and Regional Education

The University's 236-acre main campus is in Murray, Kentucky, a city of over 17,000 residents. The University offers undergraduate, graduate and doctoral programs, professional instruction, as well as continuing education programs.

MSU comprises more than 70 major buildings, including classroom and office buildings and two libraries. The Waterfield Library houses the circulating collection, reference sources, government documents, microforms and periodicals. The historic Pogue Library contains special collections relating to the history and culture of west Kentucky and the region. Murray State also operates the Pullen Farm, Hancock Biological Station, Breathitt Veterinary Center and The Doran Arboretum at Murray State University.

MSU also offers a variety of courses and degree programs at its regional campuses in Fort Campbell, Henderson, Hopkinsville, Madisonville, and Paducah.

ACCREDITATION:

Recognition of the quality of Murray State programs is reflected in its accreditations. The University has been continuously accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission

on Colleges (SACSCOC) since 1928. Program accreditations have also been attained in animal health technology, art, business, counseling, dietetics, several engineering technology programs, chemistry, journalism and mass communications, music, nursing, occupational safety and health, physics and engineering physics, social work, special education, teacher education and veterinary laboratory diagnostics.

NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND BUILDINGS:

Murray State is working with the state legislature for the establishment of a School of Veterinary Medicine and work continues in this regard. The University is also working toward a Medical School campus in partnership with the University of Louisville. Both initiatives would represent significant advancements for the region and state. Site work for a new School of Nursing and Health Professions building is currently underway and funding has been approved for construction of two additional buildings in the near future.

STUDENTS:

Among the more than 10,000 students enrolled for the 2024-25 academic year, 49 states and 53 countries are represented. Total enrollment includes 8,281 undergraduate students and 1,754 graduate students. The University is approximately 63 percent female and 37 percent male. This year's first-time freshman class, which is the fourth-largest in University history, had an average ACT score of 23 and represents 78 counties in Kentucky. Nearly eleven percent of this year's freshmen were named high school valedictorians. This class follows the Fall 2023 freshman class of 1,660 students, which was the largest in Murray State history.

As of Fall 2024, Murray State University's retention rate for overall students seeking bachelor's degrees is 75 percent. The University includes nearly 450 full-time, instructional faculty with 77 percent having earned the highest degree in their field.

THE UNIVERSITY (CONT.)

FUNDING:

Based on the University's most recent data, a record \$136 million is awarded annually to students in financial aid and scholarships, and among its freshman class, 99 percent received a scholarship or financial aid. Murray State has an expanded regional tuition rate that includes a total of 15 states across the country. These states include Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia. Murray State also offers enhanced academic achievement scholarships to emphasize Grade Point Average for entering freshman students. These scholarships are awarded at the time of admission and can be stacked on top of competitive scholarships and financial aid students receive. Numerous scholarships and aid opportunities are available, such as the Murray State Promise, which covers the cost of tuition for eligible Kentucky first-time freshmen and new transfer students.

ACADEMICS AND CAMPUS LIFE:

In addition to 148 academic programs, students can get involved in more than 170 student organizations. Students study abroad each year in one of more than 40 countries including Belize, China, Germany, England and more. A unique feature of Murray State is the residential college

system. Upon enrollment at the University, students are assigned to one of eight residential colleges within the Murray community which allows them to meet fellow students and find additional opportunities for personal and professional growth. Following graduation, Racers join more than 80,000 fellow alumni who are located throughout the world.

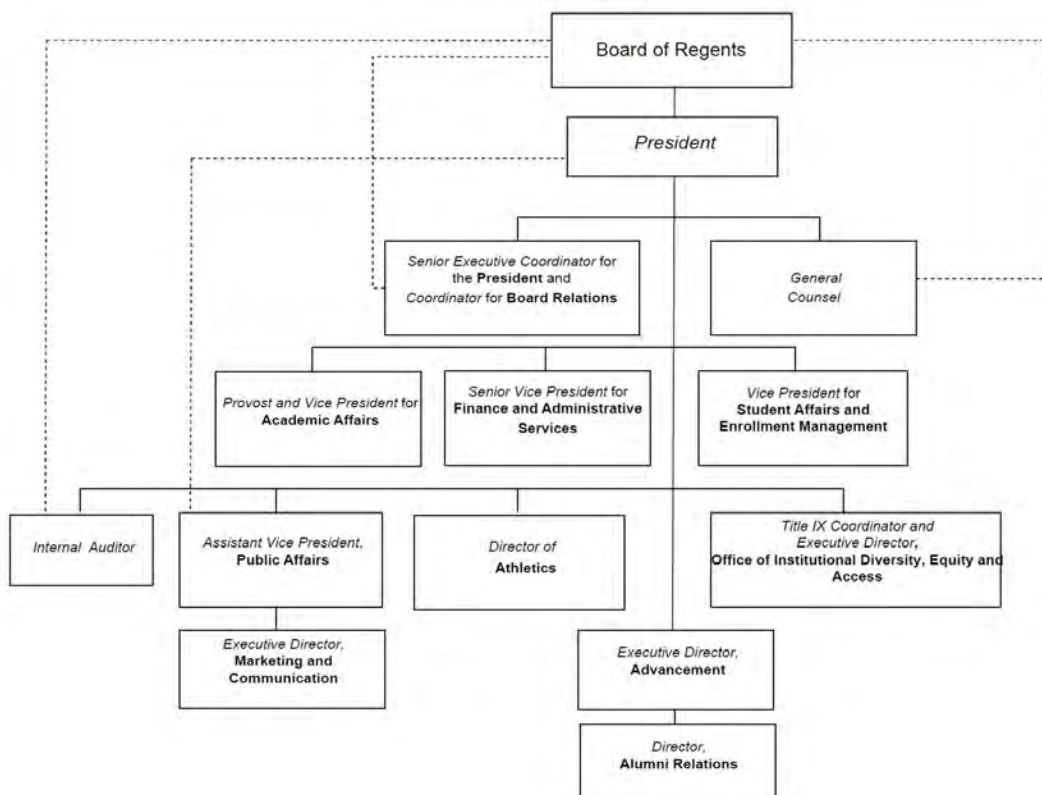
UNIVERSITY ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE:

Murray State is one of eight public universities supported by the Commonwealth of Kentucky. The Council on Postsecondary Education coordinates policies aimed at improving Kentucky's postsecondary education system. The Council is a statewide coordinating agency comprised of 15 members with 13 citizens, one faculty member and one student appointed by the Governor; the Commissioner of Education is an ex-officio member.

Governing authority for Murray State resides with the University's Board of Regents, consisting of 11 members, eight of whom are appointed by the Governor of Kentucky and three of whom are elected to represent the campus constituencies of faculty, staff and students.

Responsibility for day-to-day operations is entrusted to the University President, who is the chief executive officer. The President's direct reports are shown in the organizational chart below.

**MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
2024-2025**





MISSION, VISION AND STRATEGIC ATTRIBUTES

Vision: To be one of the best student-centered, comprehensive universities in the nation.

Mission: Murray State University places our highest priority on student learning and excellent teaching, blending the range of educational opportunities often found at research institutions with the nurturing student-teacher interactions usually found at smaller universities.

STRATEGIC ATTRIBUTES:

We offer relevant undergraduate and graduate degree programs with core studies in the liberal arts and sciences, leading to degrees from certificates to advanced practice doctorates that prepare students for success. Through effective and creative teaching, both in traditional formats

and in an online environment; the opportunity to apply knowledge and skills to real-world situations, and academic and student support services, our quality faculty and staff foster student growth in knowledge, critical inquiry and innovative thinking. As a public comprehensive university dedicated to diversity, global awareness and intellectual curiosity, we actively engage students, faculty, staff and the community in collaborative scholarship, creative activity and research. We invest in our communities through thoughtful public service in our 18-county service region and beyond. Our uniqueness arises from our combination of academic excellence, welcoming atmosphere and dedication to student success through mentored, real-world learning opportunities in an open-minded, supportive and innovative learning environment.

THE POSITION: PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION:

The President is the chief executive and administrative officer of Murray State University. The President, who reports directly to and in close collaboration with the 11-member Board of Regents, is responsible to that governing board for the supervision and administration of academic, business, and fiscal operations, as well as all other matters pertaining to the Institution.

The President fosters and builds upon the existing strengths, traditions, human and financial resources of the University to provide the personal and professional leadership necessary to guide the Institution's future course and advance the University's role and standing in higher education throughout the world.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES:

1. Leads the University forward by identifying opportunities and developing and implementing a strategic vision that ensures fulfillment of the University's mission.
2. Assures that the University's finances are managed, and revenue streams are developed and expanded to support the achievement of the strategic vision of the University; develops and presents both a biennial budget request and an annual budget to the Board of Regents for approval; oversees implementation of the annual budget.
3. Provides recommendations to the Board relating to the general policies of the institution which foster and promote instruction, research and service.
4. Promotes and encourages the University's role in economic development, research and the development of global competence in students and the community.
5. Promotes and maintains effective communication with all constituencies, both internal and external; speaks officially for the University subject to the regulations of the Board of Regents, before all federal, state, and local governmental offices, boards and agencies; serves as the primary liaison between the University, Government Agencies and leaders; serves as the University's representative on the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education.

THE POSITION: PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY (CONT.)

6. Assures effective partnership and communication with members of the Board of Regents by consulting with the board chair, committees and individuals during the development or clarification of current policy or strategic direction, ensuring open and thoughtful consideration of all views during board deliberations, clearly communicating senior leadership's position on issues at hand, responding to board inquires and carrying out board initiatives, policies, or programs through development and implementation of the Board of Regents Policy Manual.
7. Serves as the liaison between the Board of Regents and the Faculty Senate, Staff Congress and Student Government Association, administrative officers, individual members of the campus community, alumni and other appropriate off-campus constituencies.
8. Interprets existing policy and on occasion, has the authority to establish new policy with respect to educational, business and financial matters which are not specifically addressed in broad policy approved by the Board of Regents.

QUALIFICATIONS AND DESIRED LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS:

Doctorate or comparable terminal degree from a regionally accredited institution or equivalent.

Demonstrated experience leading and managing a large, complex organization in a challenging financial environment.

Successful leadership experience in higher education administration is preferred.

DESIRED LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS:

Problem-Solving and Decision-Making. Problems are highly varied, complex and often non-recurring; require novel and creative approaches to resolution. New concepts and approaches may have to be developed.

Decisions have significant, broad implications for the management and operations of the entire University. Decisions relative to the Strategic Plan and direction of the University are required.

Decisions impact:

- Entire University
- Functions across the University
- Department
- Donors and alumni
- Students/Parents
- Other external agencies and institutions

Accountability. Results are measured and defined by university mission, vision and strategies. The President establishes goals and determines how to accomplish them with few or no guidelines to follow.

Supervises, directs, assigns, plans and reviews the work of vice presidents, deans, directors, chairs and other subordinate administrative officers.

Relationships With Others. Collaborates and interacts within the dept/unit, university wide and externally to:

- Exchange detailed information or resolve varied problems.
- Access and/or work with sensitive and/or confidential information.
- Identify needs/concerns of others, determine potential solutions, resolve or redirect appropriately.
- Persuade, gain cooperation and acceptance of ideas, or collaborate on significant projects.
- Resolve conflicts, negotiate or collaborate on major projects.
- Manage sensitive issues and facilitate collaboration at the highest level.

DISCLAIMER: The above statements are intended to indicate the general nature and level of work performed by the University President. The statements are not designed to contain or be interpreted as an exhaustive list of all duties, responsibilities, skills, and qualifications required to perform the position.





APPLICATIONS AND NOMINATIONS

Academic Search is partnering with Murray State University in this national search. Nominators and prospective candidates are encouraged to reach out for a confidential discussion by emailing Dr. Wanda Bigham at wanda.bigham@academicsearch.org (copy and paste the email address into your email client) or calling 334-425-6865. You may also contact Dr. Margaret Venable at margaret.venable@academicsearch.org (copy and paste the email address) or call 404-692-1383.

Additional information about Murray State University can be found at www.murraystate.edu.

To apply, a candidate should submit:

1. A detailed letter of interest addressing the Required Qualifications and Desired Leadership Characteristics for the President as outlined in this profile.
2. A CV with relevant information about educational background, administrative experience, responsibilities, and accomplishments.
3. A list of five professional references, including names, phone numbers, and email addresses, noting the candidate's relationship for each reference. References will not be contacted until later in the search process and only with the candidate's permission.

2024-25 PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Leon Owens

Chair – Board of Regents and President – Swift & Staley, Incorporated
Paducah, Kentucky

Dr. Robbie Fitch

Vice Chair – Board of Regents and Dentistry Practitioner
Murray, Kentucky

Virginia Gray

Member – Board of Regents and Senior Manager – Tennessee Valley Authority – North Region
Hopkinsville, Kentucky

Brendan Hawkins

Student Regent – Board of Regents and Student Government Association President
New Lenox, Illinois

Dr. David Meinschein

Member – Board of Regents and Superintendent – Livingston County Schools
LaCenter, Kentucky

G. L. Ovey

Member – Board of Regents and Retired Commonwealth's Attorney – 56th Judicial Circuit
Eddyville, Kentucky

Dr. Matthew Price

Member – Board of Regents and OB/GYN – Medical Director of Women's Health – Murray-Calloway County Hospital
Murray, Kentucky

Emily Roark

Member – Board of Regents and Attorney – Bryant Law Center
Paducah, Kentucky

Dr. Melony Shemberger

Faculty Regent – Board of Regents and Professor of Journalism and Mass Communications and Undergraduate Program Assessment Coordinator
Murray, Kentucky

Tom Waldrop

Member – Board of Regents and Realtor/Appraiser/Developer – Trifecta Real Estate Services
Mayfield, Kentucky

Dr. Dan Wann

Professor of Psychology
Murray, Kentucky

Roslyn White

Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management
Murray, Kentucky

Dr. David Wilson

Staff Regent – Board of Regents and Director of Housing
Murray, Kentucky

Katelyn Young

Murray State Graduate Student and Student-Athlete
Oakwood, Illinois

AD HOC COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Courtney Hixon

Director of Human Resources
Murray, Kentucky

Jill Hunt

Senior Executive Coordinator for the President, Coordinator for Board Relations and Secretary to the Board
Murray, Kentucky

Rob Miller

General Counsel
Murray, Kentucky

Murray State University endorses the intent of all federal and state laws created to prohibit discrimination. Murray State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, age, veteran status or disability in employment or application for employment, admissions or the provision of services and provides, upon request, reasonable accommodation including auxiliary aids and services necessary to afford individuals with disabilities equal access to participate in all programs and activities.

Murray State University supports a clean and healthy campus. Please refrain from personal tobacco use.

In the heart of Jackson's Purchase 'Neath the sun's warm glow

Is the home of Murray State

Finest place we know. (Alma Mater)

Please send materials as email attachments in pdf format to: MurrayStatePresident@academicsearch.org (copy and paste the email address).

For full consideration by the Search Committee, applications should be submitted by **January 24, 2025**.

ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search is assisting Murray 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.

