SEARCH PROFILE:
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH, ASSESSMENT, AND ANALYTICS
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The University of South Carolina is seeking a collaborative leader as their next Executive Director for the Office of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Analytics (OIRAA). The successful candidate will have experience in higher education, familiarity with multiple data platforms, and a successful record of working with teams and communicating across complex organizations. Overseeing a current staff of 12 and coordinating across offices and campuses within the University of South Carolina System, the Executive Director provides leadership for institutional research, institutional effectiveness, and accreditation.
THE UNIVERSITY

Founded in 1801, the University of South Carolina (UofSC) Columbia is the flagship institution of the University of South Carolina System—the leading educator for the state, serving more than 52,000 students across eight campuses. The flagship campus is located in the capital city of Columbia, SC.

With over 730,000 residents in the greater metro area, Columbia is one of the largest cities in the state and is among the most livable places in the South with easy access to amenities, dining, shopping, entertainment, and outdoor recreation. The city is within a 2-hour drive to nearby beaches, within 90 minutes of the Appalachian Mountains, and within 20 minutes of nearby Lake Murray. Visit Experience Columbia to find out more.

More than 35,300 students enrolled at UofSC Columbia in fall 2021, hailing from all 50 states and more than 90 nations. UofSC is one of the oldest public universities in the country and the first state university to be supported continuously by annual state appropriations. It is one of 56 public universities in the US to earn both the top research classification and the community engagement classification from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Over the past 10 years, applications to the Columbia campus have more than doubled, admission has become increasingly competitive, and the size of the freshman class has grown by more than 35%. In fall 2021, UofSC received a record-breaking number of applicants and welcomed its second largest class in the history of the institution.

The flagship campus in Columbia includes sixteen colleges and schools with 922 tenured faculty, 270 tenure-track faculty, and 621 professional-track faculty, many of whom have earned significant recognition, placing the university in the top 5% of public universities in the nation for the number of national faculty awards received. UofSC operates two medical school campuses (one each in Columbia and Greenville) and is home to the state’s only public law school. UofSC is nationally ranked in 60+ academic programs—more than any other institution in the state. UofSC was ranked in the top 3% in the nation for the number of African American graduates by Diverse Issues in Higher Education in 2014. Other rankings include UofSC’s international MBA program, undergraduate international business major, and online nursing graduate program were all ranked number one by the U.S. News and World Report. The university has distinguished itself as the nation’s best first-year experience among public universities (U.S. News & World Report) and is rated a best value public college by Kiplinger’s, Inc. and Forbes. Ranked by the U.S. Department of Education in the top 10% for its public university graduation rates, UofSC boasts a six-year graduation rate (2013 cohort) of 77% and a first-year retention rate of 89% (2018 cohort).

More than 6,000 full- and part-time faculty and staff members are employed at UofSC Columbia. UofSC is a Carnegie Tier I Research Institution with research expenditures exceeding $200 million in 2020 and in 2021, researchers at the university secured 20 sponsored awards of $1 million or more each. Among the 114 research centers and institutes hosted by UofSC, there are five prestigious centers for research excellence that receive more than $96 million in federal funding.
UNIVERSITY MISSION
The primary mission of the University of South Carolina is the education of the state's citizens through teaching, research, creative activity, and community engagement. At the heart of its mission lies the university's responsibility to state and society to promote the dissemination of knowledge, cultural enrichment, and an enhanced quality of life. The University of South Carolina serves a diverse population of students with widely varying backgrounds, career goals, and levels of aspiration. The university offers over 320 degrees at the bachelor's, master's, doctoral, and professional program levels, affording students the most comprehensive array of educational programs in the state. Opportunities for personal and career development are provided to the citizens of South Carolina through outreach and continuing education activities. The university provides additional opportunities for associate degrees through Fort Jackson and through the oversight of regional Palmetto College campuses (Lancaster, Salkehatchie, Sumter, and Union).

Through classroom and laboratory instruction delivered in a variety of face-to-face and distance learning formats and modalities, degree programs are offered in the following areas: arts and sciences; business; education; engineering and computing; hospitality, retail, and sport management; information and communications; law; medicine; music; nursing; pharmacy; public health; and social work. The depth and breadth of its graduate programs distinguishes the University of South Carolina from all other institutions of higher learning in South Carolina.

STRATEGIC PLAN AND PRIORITIES
The University of South Carolina is one of the fastest-growing flagship universities in the nation with cutting-edge research initiatives to highly personal student services, and top-ranked academic programs to top-ranked athletics teams. UofSC recognizes the value of being agile during times of change and is committed to properly serving its students, community and state well into the future. The current strategic plan was created to identify priorities that will propel the University of South Carolina to future successes.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH, ASSESSMENT & ANALYTICS

The Office of Institutional Research, Assessment, & Analytics (OIRAA) is supported by a staff of professionals in the fields of analytics, assessment, and institutional research who work to connect the UofSC community to information about university data, assessment activities, and the accreditation process. The Executive Director serves as the face of OIRAA and supervises the Director of Institutional Research and the Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Accreditation, both of whom have additional direct reports. As such, the Executive Director collaborates, leads, and supports institutional research and institutional effectiveness engagements across the University. The next Executive Director will have the opportunity to assist the University’s goal to join the Association of American Universities by working with the OIRAA staff to help articulate the research and education profile of the UofSC.

While the primary focus of OIRAA is the collection, analysis, and dissemination of data and information pertaining to the Columbia campus, the office also has substantial responsibility for the entire University of South Carolina System. The flagship Columbia campus is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award associate, baccalaureate, master’s, and doctoral degrees. The regional Palmetto College campuses (Lancaster, Salkehatchie, Sumter, and Union) are branch campuses of the University of South Carolina Columbia; the branch campuses are accredited as part of USC Columbia; therefore the continued accreditation of the University of South Carolina Columbia and these campuses is mutually dependent. Each Senior campus (Aiken, Beaufort, Upstate) is separably accredited. OIRAA staff direct the SACSCOC continuous compliance process for both UofSC Columbia and Palmetto College, as well as oversee IPEDS reporting for the entire UofSC system. Visit the OIRAA website for information on current efforts in these areas.

LEADERSHIP AGENDA

University of South Carolina seeks a visionary and collaborative leader with the experience, knowledge, and interpersonal skills to lead the institutional research, assessment, analytics, data integration, compliance reporting, and accreditation efforts. The Executive Director needs to have strong data management and communication skills to consolidate, centralize, and advance data collection, dissemination, and use across the University. Toward this end, the key priorities of the position include:

Sustain, and strengthen partnerships across campus and system to advance the work of OIRAA. The work of OIRAA is partially dependent on partnerships with other units and campuses that collect or house data related to certain institutional functions. The new Executive Director will need to learn about the network of existing data-gathering and assessment efforts and seek ways to bridge those efforts with OIRAA processes.

Work alongside a new campus administration to inform their understanding of the University. UofSC has an incoming president and provost, both of whom will need access to information and data housed within OIRAA. The Executive Director and OIRAA staff will need to be responsive to these requests and provide data to help inform leadership goals and decisions.

Provide leadership and direction in the design, development, and maintenance of University longitudinal databases. Consults with the Division of Information and Technology regarding warehousing capability, and in developing and maintaining database solutions and implementation of new information technologies in support of institutional research needs. Development and promotion of public-facing dashboards has ability to reduce the number of requests OIRAA receives through the data request system.

Develop the strategic vision for OIRAA. As the official reporting department for the University of South Carolina, OIRAA must balance data gathering needs and opportunities alongside meeting annual reporting requirements and filling data and information requests.
There is opportunity for a new Executive Director to think long-term regarding the services and output of the office, and to advocate for the staffing and budget needed to effectively accomplish the OIRAA mission. This includes supporting efforts to document the lifecycle of data collected for various purposes; improve data storage; and portray the demand on the office’s human and intellectual resources.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS
The successful candidate for this position will have a strong understanding of data management in higher education and experience in positions of progressively complex responsibility as related to institutional research, assessment, and analytics.

DESIRED SKILLS, EXPERIENCES, AND CHARACTERISTICS
- Proven success supervising a team of professionals in a higher education setting, to include a record of considering the training and development needs of individual staff
- Strong communications skills that will enable effective relationships.
- Awareness of trends in higher education that will assist in strategic decision making.
- Proven ability to apply a systems perspective to the work agenda, including experience networking and aligning key performance indicators across a complex organizational structure.
- Leadership capacity to work across the UofSC system to include all campuses in the collection and reporting of data to the SC Commission on Higher Education (CHE) and the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).
- Ability to identify and use appropriate and compelling data to contribute to strategic planning and decision making.
- Keen understanding of statistical analysis, and the ability to analyze and leverage data to advance institutional effectiveness.
- Capacity to establish boundaries and guidelines for requesting data and information from OIRAA.
- Understanding of data security and privacy.
- Ability to explain the use of data for the non-technical user, including relating measurements to program improvement and promoting data-informed practices.
- Ability to support and champion the accreditation process as needed, including the continuing compliance needs in the interim period between SACSCOC visits.
- Ability to help implement lessons and recommendations from last SACSCOC visit.
- Familiarity with multiple research and assessment platforms, understanding of how they can be leveraged to assist decision making, and an awareness of emerging technologies and trends.
- Evidence of promoting a culture of assessment across the University.
- Experience with understanding and improving rankings, and ability to identify minor changes that will make a difference.
- Active participation in professional associations germane to the work of OIRAA.
- Leadership approach that supports staff development and encourages life-work balance.
- Proven ability to identify strengths among staff and delegate tasks accordingly.
APPLICATION PROCEDURES

This search is assisted by Academic Search. Applications should consist of:

1. a detailed cover letter addressing the expectations of the position;
2. a current curriculum vitae (CV); and
3. a list of five professional references with contact information and a brief description explaining the working relationship of each to the applicant.

References will not be contacted without the explicit permission of the candidate. **All documents should be submitted in PDF format.**

Nominations and applications should be sent to SCOIRAA@academicsearch.org. **The position is open until filled.** Assisting the University of South Carolina with this search is Mahauganee Shaw (mshaw@academicsearch.org), Senior Consultant with Academic Search. Nominators and prospective applicants may reach out directly to arrange a confidential discussion about this opportunity.

*The University of South Carolina does not discriminate in educational or employment opportunities on the basis of race, sex, gender, gender identity, transgender status, age, color, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, genetics, protected veteran status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions.*
ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search is assisting the University of South Carolina 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. For more information, visit www.academicsearch.org.