



## **Vice President for Finance and Administration and Chief Financial Officer**

Saint Xavier University was founded in Chicago by the Sisters of Mercy in 1846, holding the distinctions of being Chicago's first Catholic university as well as the first Mercy institution of higher learning in the world. A four-year private institution, SXU educates persons to search for truth, to think critically, to communicate effectively and to serve wisely and compassionately in support of human dignity and the common good. With an enrollment of over 3,000 students, Saint Xavier University strives to provide its learning community with a solid foundation in liberal arts and professional education, establishing well-rounded members of society. SXU is a designated Hispanic Serving Institution with a 55% population of minorities or people of color.

The Vice President for Finance and Administration/Chief Financial Officer (VPFA/CFO) serves as the University's chief finance and business officer, reporting directly to the President and playing a critical role as a member of the Senior Leadership Team. This position provides strategic and operational leadership in key areas, including financial planning, budgeting and analysis, accounting, treasury and risk management, asset management, human resources and legal oversight. The VPFA/CFO will work collaboratively with a dynamic team of professionals to advance Board-approved strategic priorities and ensure the University's financial health and operational excellence. The successful candidate will contribute to an energetic, forward-thinking leadership team dedicated to institutional growth and sustainability.

### **Key Priorities for the Vice President**

- Develop a strategic financial vision that supports the institution's vision and strategic plan. SXU is operating under a strategic plan that broadly pursues four key types of objectives: students, community, revenue, and people and places. The VPF/CFO will play a leadership role in the revenue generation strategy as well as in fleshing out the strategic allocation of resources to achieve goals along the other dimensions. The successful candidate will be skilled in the use of benchmarks to assess progress, assessment of existing and potential initiatives, and reallocation of resources to respond to changing trends.
- Oversee successful execution of financial operations, including developing and implementing operating and capital budgets and ensuring timely and accurate reporting. The VPF/CFO will provide leadership to the finance area and will oversee real estate, risk management, human resources, and legal services; experience in one or more of these additional areas, preferably including skill in managing real estate as a strategic asset and in managing enterprise and legal risk, will be valuable. This leader will ensure that required financial processes (annual audits, preparation of 990s, etc.) run effectively and are

executed accurately and in a timely fashion and that budget managers across campus have the financial information required to manage their budgets. The successful candidate would be prepared to play a leadership role in managing debt (refinancing, use of swaps and other derivatives, optimizing the use of debt in a variety of interest rate environments, etc.) and assets (cash, endowment, real estate, other investments).

- Work with the senior team, the president, and the Board of Trustees to cultivate an environment of strategic financial stewardship. While the VPF/CFO provides leadership for financial management, financial health is a shared responsibility requiring stewardship across the University. The successful candidate will be a valued colleague to other senior leaders and a trusted advisor to the President and Board, particularly in matters of financial management. In addition, this leader will communicate clearly and transparently to campus constituents about the financial health of the University and will appropriately engage stakeholder groups (such as faculty and staff) and Trustees (including the Audit Committee and the Sustainable Financial Model Committee) to inform decision-making.

### **Essential Duties and Responsibilities**

- Provides leadership in developing, implementing and monitoring the University's operating and capital budgets. This includes forecasting the "walk forward" budget. In addition, works closely with the Controller and auditors to produce the year-end audit and 990 tax return.
- Supervises the Controller and Director of Financial Planning/Analysis. Provides guidance and direction to those areas to ensure their areas are providing Service Excellence and helping to create a Sustainable Financial Model.
- Oversees the University's real estate, risk management, and legal services. This includes working with attorneys and insurers as we respond to lawsuits and complaints, as well as review of contracts and other legal documents. This also includes assessing the viability of selling or purchasing properties to further the University's mission and strategic priorities.
- Oversees the university's asset management strategy, ensuring effective stewardship, optimization, and risk management of financial, physical, and investment assets to support long-term institutional sustainability.
- Works closely with the Board of Trustees and the President to prepare the quarterly meetings of the Audit Committee and Sustainable Financial Model Committee, as well as the Business Meeting. In addition, provides advice to Board on all financial matters. In consultation with Board, oversees the University's endowment investments.
- Serves as a trusted advisor and strategic partner to the senior leadership team, providing financial insights and guidance to support informed decision-making.
- Responsible for monitoring the debt of the University and determining the appropriateness of refinancing a portion of the bond debt. This includes assessing the viability of swaps and other derivatives, as well as determining whether fixed or variable rate debt would be the best approach.

## **Qualifications**

The Vice President for Finance and Administration/CFO will have a proven record of progressively responsible leadership.

- Demonstrate a strong affinity for Catholic, Mercy higher education and a passion for the mission of the University.
- Strong background in business, accounting, and financial management.
- Demonstrated record of effective senior management experience in financial systems management, preferably in a higher education environment.
- A collaborative, inclusive, and transparent management style.
- A person with strong communication skills who listens, writes and speaks with clarity and explains financial transactions to non-financial colleagues.
- An ability to think strategically and to analyze the financial impact of existing and potential programs as the University plans for the future.
- Demonstrated ability to analyze and improve upon existing internal controls.
- Demonstrated understanding of the structures and techniques of debt management, including ability to work with banks, rating agencies and underwriters effectively.
- An ability to provide the President, the Board of Trustees and all constituents with a dispassionate analysis of information related to key issues.
- An ability to create a framework of financial accountability within the administration, the finance area and throughout organization.
- An understanding of investment strategies and an ability to assist the President and the Board with their responsibilities in continually building and managing the endowment.
- Embody the core values of respect, excellence, compassion, service, hospitality, integrity, diversity and learning for life.

## **Education**

- Completion of a bachelor's degree at an accredited college or university. Master's degree or Certified Public Accountant (CPA) / Certified Financial Analyst preferred.
- Certified Public Accountant (CPA) preferred.

## Experience

- Chief Financial Officer experience, or experience reporting to that level (Controller, Assistant CFO).
- Successful track record of financial experience and management experience with the day-to-day financial operations of an organization of at least 50 staff persons.

Saint Xavier University (SXU) invites inquiries, nominations, and applications for a Vice President for Finance and Administration/Chief Financial Officer (VPF/CFO). President Keith Elder seeks a skilled, strategic leader to work collaboratively to advance Board-approved strategic priorities to ensure the University's financial health and operational excellence. For further information on the search, please [visit the SXU website](#). The new VPF/CFO is expected to assume office in Summer 2025, ideally by July 1.

Academic Search is assisting Saint Xavier with this search. Confidential discussions may be arranged by contacting Senior Consultant Dr. Scott Flanagan by booking [here](#). Please send a CV before your call to [scott.flanagan@academicsearch.org](mailto:scott.flanagan@academicsearch.org).

Applications (cover letter and resume), nominations, and expressions of interest can be submitted in confidence to [SaintXavierCFO@academicsearch.org](mailto:SaintXavierCFO@academicsearch.org). When submitting a nomination, please include the nominee's full name, title, position, and email address. The position will remain open until filled. Review of applications will begin around April 11, 2025, and applications received by April 21, 2025, are guaranteed full consideration.

The salary range for this position is \$175,000-\$250,000 annually. Final salary offered will be commensurate with qualifications and experience. In addition to a competitive salary, Saint Xavier provides a comprehensive benefits package, including health coverage, retirement plans, and tuition waivers, along with many other advantages detailed on the [Human Resources Benefits](#) website.

*Saint Xavier University affirms its position as a Catholic institution, inspired by the heritage of the Sisters of Mercy, and asserts its rights to employ persons who subscribe to the mission, vision and core values of the University.*

*Saint Xavier University will make all decisions regarding recruitment, hiring, promotions and all other terms and conditions of employment without discrimination on grounds of race, color, creed, sex, religion, national origin, age, physical or mental disability, veteran status or other factors that cannot be lawfully the basis for an employment decision. Hiring decisions will be based on the bona fide occupational qualifications of each applicant. The University is committed to diversity and encourages applications from individuals with a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences.*