



## **Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs Position Profile**

Metropolitan State University of Denver seeks a dynamic leader, bridge-builder, and strategist to serve as its next Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs (Provost/EVPAA) at a pivotal moment in the institution's history. The successful candidate for this critical role will be an inspiring and inclusive leader who promotes leadership and empowerment at every level of the University. A strong collaborator, the Provost/EVPAA will act as a thought-partner for President Janine Davidson, Ph.D., and other members of the Senior Leadership Team and President's Cabinet.

As the University's chief academic officer, the Provost/EVPAA will set the strategic direction for all academic matters and priorities in service to MSU Denver's unique access mission. The Provost/EVPAA will serve as the key ambassador between faculty and administration, building effective and sustainable relationships with an eye toward the whole student experience to promote enrollment, retention, persistence, and success.

The Provost/EVPAA will have a strong understanding of the complex social, political, economic, and technological changes affecting higher education today, and bring creativity and vision to help MSU Denver meet those potential challenges head on. The individual will also capitalize on the University's current momentum and leverage its mission and values as an Anchor Institution to create a lasting imprint on the city of Denver, the state of Colorado and beyond.

### **MSU Denver**

Established in 1965, MSU Denver was founded to serve students who were underrepresented in higher education, those whose life paths and experiences did not fit the traditional mold. Fifty-five years later, the University continues to serve more than 18,000 of Colorado's extraordinary and diverse students, providing them with the foundation on which to build their unique American dream.

As the third largest institution of higher education in Colorado and the only one with an open-access mission, MSU Denver is a model university for today's college students. The University serves the most diverse undergraduate student population in the state, as well as the most first-generation students and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals students. Nearly 80% of MSU Denver students work while going to school and the University is focused on making sure they have the well-rounded educational experience and wraparound services they need to excel.

Through affordable, flexible, and holistic education, MSU Denver helps students build essential skills grounded in a multicultural and global perspective that lead to undergraduate and graduate degrees, followed by career and life success.

#### *Real-World Learning for Today's Students*

MSU Denver is dedicated to meeting students where they are and launching them to where they want to go – with robust in-person, hybrid and online offerings in bachelor's and master's degree programs that prepare students to connect to careers, prepare for the future, and serve their communities.

The University is known for its real-world education, balancing technical skills honed through tangible practice along with essential skills developed through the arts and humanities.

#### *Student-Centered Academic Excellence*

MSU Denver prides itself on a richly talented faculty comprised of teacher-scholars who are highly dedicated and empowered to support diverse students in growing as scholars, becoming leaders in their fields, and succeeding in their personal, professional, and civic lives. The University delivers a relevant, rigorous, and innovative academic experience, offering more than 100 bachelor's degrees and eight graduate programs. MSU Denver Athletics compete in the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference (RMAC) and in the NCAA Division II with sixteen sport intercollegiate athletic programs.

#### *Civic and Economic Catalyst*

MSU Denver activates the talents and passions of its students, alumni, faculty, and staff. As an Anchor Institution with a vibrant campus in the heart of downtown Denver, the University serves as a civic, economic, and talent-rich catalyst to meet the opportunities and challenges facing Colorado and its diverse communities. As an in-demand partner for employers across the city and state, the University develops workforce pipelines, puts on events and advocates for shared priorities. Most of our students often come from and return to communities in Colorado.

The University is an in-demand partner for employers across the city and state – creating workforce pipelines, developing customized education solutions, and collaborating in new and innovative ways to support the state's needs.

MSU Denver is a leader in civic engagement. In 2018, it was recognized for its excellence in engagement initiatives by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. In 2016, the University also had the highest registered-student voting rate for a large, public, regional University in the nation, turning out 66.5% of student voters.

The University is a designated Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) and has been a leader in advocacy for DACA students. MSU Denver was the first institution in Colorado to offer a special tuition rate for undocumented students in June 2012 – about three weeks before the Obama administration announced the DACA program.

### Values Lived Every Day

MSU Denver employees embody a set of shared values, affectionately known as CADRE. The values of community, accessibility, diversity, respect, entrepreneurship, and excellence permeate every aspect of University life and reflect Roadrunners' commitment to one another.

In particular, MSU Denver embodies diversity in all of its rich expressions. The University is committed to engaging in the anti-racism work necessary to create systemic change and to cultivating a vibrant and healthy learning community. MSU Denver also serves as a convener, bringing together civic, industry, public and nonprofit leaders, activists, academics, and the community to address the most pressing issues of racial justice facing its campus, city, state, and world.

### Innovative and Forward Looking

In 2019, MSU Denver was named the fifth most innovative university in the West region by U.S. News and World Report. That entrepreneurial spirit characterizes the University's forward-looking, adaptable approach to meeting the challenges of our day.

Like colleges and universities across the nation, MSU Denver is currently working to address a trifecta of unexpected challenges: a global pandemic and its resulting economic impacts, as well as a historic racial-justice movement. The University sees this difficult moment as a time of great opportunity in which it can rise to meet these challenges and define a new model for excellence in higher education. MSU Denver has already begun to examine how it can evolve and advance its mission-critical work to respond to the needs of its students and the community.

### **MSU Denver Leadership**

The University is governed by a nine-member Board of Trustees appointed by Colorado's governor. These impressive leaders offer a wealth of industry, government, and non-profit expertise, as well as a sincere passion for supporting the MSU Denver's mission. Among the University's most recently appointed trustees is an immigrant-rights advocate who is also a DACA recipient.

### **About the President**

Janine Davidson, Ph.D., has served as president of MSU Denver since 2017. She is a national thought-leader in higher education and on topics such as public service and national security policy. She is a life member of the Council on Foreign Relations and a Fellow in the National Academy of Public Administration.

Prior to her time at the University, Davidson served as the 32nd undersecretary of the United States Navy. Her appointment as Navy "under" followed nearly 30 years of academic, civilian, and military service.

She has taught at George Mason University, Georgetown University, Davidson College, and various professional military schools, and was an aviation and aerobatics flight instructor at the U.S. Air Force Academy. She recently returned to the classroom at MSU Denver, co-teaching a course on the philosophical and legal origins of freedom of speech in the United States.

Davidson began her career as an Air Force officer and cargo pilot. She was a distinguished graduate of the Air Force Squadron Officer School and was the first woman to fly the Air Force's tactical C-130.

As president of MSU Denver, Davidson has launched and developed the Classroom to Career Hub – aimed at connecting MSU Denver students with local and national employers for a direct pipeline into Colorado's economy and beyond. She has also overseen the creation of the University's Health Institute – a collaboration of 10 academic departments in health-related fields that addresses the state's health care workforce shortages.

Davidson has proven to be a fierce advocate for students, staunchly supporting the DREAM Act and MSU Denver's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals students. From her very first days on campus, she has championed the role colleges and universities play in "holding the line on the American dream." She has also implemented an inclusive leadership model at MSU Denver, which emphasizes bringing diverse perspectives to the table and empowering employees to act as leaders at all levels of the university.

### **Leadership Qualities**

MSU Denver is looking for an effective, inclusive, creative, and collaborative leader to take its well-established academic programs and operations to the next level. The ideal candidate will have a can-do work ethic and a strong track record of tangible successes and achievements.

In the spirit of inclusive leadership, the Provost/EVPAA will be fully empowered by President Davidson to lead, innovate, and engage the community at this critical moment and to advance a shared vision of student-centered innovation and excellence.

The Provost/EVPAA will have a strong commitment to enhancing diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives in the University community and the ability to recruit outstanding new faculty as well as retain and promote high-achieving current faculty.

### **Key Opportunities and Challenges**

The next Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs will join MSU Denver at a crucial moment in its history. Embracing the Roadrunner spirit of entrepreneurship, the Provost/EVPAA must have the ability to set priorities, determine a plan to achieve them and communicate effectively with multiple constituencies to implement them effectively. Specifically, the Provost/EVPAA will work to address the following challenges and opportunities:

- ***Set a new vision for the Academic Affairs Branch***

The Provost/EVPAA will have the opportunity to establish a vision and related strategies/goals to enhance the work of the Academic Affairs Branch, as well as build upon a recent strategic realignment of academic programs to better meet student needs and address workforce opportunities. This reorganization included the launch of an innovative Health Institute that integrates 10 health-related academic departments in order to better facilitate relevant, interdisciplinary education.

The Provost/EVPAA will develop and nurture partnerships between the University and various Colorado organizations that further elevate the academic enterprise, including innovative educational programs such as the institution's on-campus hotel and the Center for Education Solutions. The Provost/EVPAA will value and promote both time-honored and essential programs in the arts and humanities and programs with a more direct career focus.

- ***Enhance and establish new academic programs***

With a strong understanding of current and emerging trends in higher education, the Provost/EVPAA will identify and implement promising practices for current academic programs and make research-based decisions on the development and launch of new programs. Given the current climate, the Provost/EVPAA will be asked to look both at programs that meet short-term enrollment and workforce goals and at those which merit long-term strategic investment.

- ***Generate and steward new revenue streams***

With state investment continuing to decline, the Provost/EVPAA will need to manage resources strategically and explore innovative new revenue streams to support current and future academic programs. As the chief academic affairs officer, the Provost/EVPAA will work in close collaboration with stakeholders from across the University, such as deans, chairs and other faculty members, to decide when and where to make strategic investments that benefit the University, meet the needs of students as well as the workforce demands of Colorado industry.

- ***Advance MSU Denver's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion***

As a key leader at a proud Hispanic-Serving Institution and Minority Serving Institution, the Provost/EVPAA will play a significant role in MSU Denver's aspirations and efforts to become an anti-racist University. The provost will work hand-in-hand with the president, the vice president for diversity and inclusion, and other senior staff to provide compassionate, culturally relevant, and competent leadership and guidance around diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. As a bridge-builder to the faculty, the provost will work to nurture a vibrant and healthy community where all people feel welcomed and valued.

### **Qualifications**

MSU Denver's next Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs will be a creative, energetic, future-focused, high energy educational leader. The new Provost/EVPAA will possess

exceptional leadership qualities such as integrity, decisiveness, optimism, dynamism, collegiality, inclusiveness, and sound judgment. The successful candidate will be an individual capable of engaging community stakeholders in the academic mission of the University and must be passionate about MSU Denver's mission, vision, and the success of its students. Applicants or nominees should have a track record of career achievement and have strong evidence of some combination of the following professional and personal qualities, knowledge, experiences, and characteristics:

- A PhD or equivalent terminal degree in an academic discipline from an accredited institution;
- A record as an accomplished administrator with progressively responsible academic administration positions in higher education;
- A distinguished record of achievement and professional credentials consistent with appointment at the rank of full professor at Metropolitan State University of Denver, to include having earned tenure at an accredited institution of higher education;
- Experience managing faculty and staff in higher education;
- A record of commitment, advocacy and success in advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion (e.g., recruitment and retention of diverse faculty and staff; infusion of diversity and inclusive teaching practices into the curriculum; promotion of a work environment that is inclusive and collegial for all faculty, staff and students) with a commitment to creating an inclusive environment and closing equity gaps for underrepresented populations;
- Record of successful leadership, with the ability to build strong management teams, energize and inspire university constituent groups, delegate responsibility and authority, collaborate and consider alternative perspectives, and bring university groups to actionable consensus;
- Experience managing a complex budget, integrating budget decisions and strategic planning, and ensuring institutional efficiency;
- Demonstrated commitment to shared governance and a history of collaborative, inclusive, consultative, and transparent decision-making, including communicating difficult decisions respectfully;
- A demonstrated record of commitment to supporting faculty research, grant proposals, professional development, and excellence in university teaching;
- A history of innovation in developing and supporting academic programs that support student success goals;
- Demonstrated ability to integrate wrap-around student support services and career preparation effectively with academic program delivery to achieve student success;
- Demonstrated ability to communicate and work effectively with members of the higher education community, including coordinating and governing boards, legislators, and business and other community leaders including actively looking for fundraising opportunities to support student scholarships and success;
- Knowledge of institutional accreditation processes;

- Demonstrated accomplishments in collaborating with other members of a leadership team in implementing successful university-level policies and initiatives;
- Knowledge of current and emerging issues, trends, and strategies in public higher education e.g., shifting demographics, funding model changes and responses to ever changing shifting academic delivery options;
- Demonstrated ability to create and support an active, student-centered learning environment;
- Demonstrated ability to determine an appropriate array of excellent academic programs responsive to the needs of the students, as well as a track record of academic transformation and knowledge of online teaching strategies;
- Demonstrated ability to leverage state resources with grant funded projects, revenues from public-private partnerships (P3s), private philanthropic support, and other innovative streams of revenue in support of the University mission;
- A strong sense of vision for and a commitment to strategic planning at an institution like Metropolitan State University of Denver in achieving the mission; and
- Knowledge of programs that focus on the improvement of retention and graduation rates of all MSU Denver students.
- Knowledge of practices to promote student enrollment.

### **Application Process**

The Search Committee will begin reviewing applications immediately and will continue to accept applications and nominations until the position is filled. Applicants must submit: a current resume or curriculum vitae and a cover letter describing relevant experience and interest in the position. Nomination letters should include the name, position, address, and telephone number of the nominee. All applications and nominations will be handled in confidence.

Applications and letters of nomination should be submitted by email to:



**Alberto Pimentel, Managing Partner**

**Emy Peña, Partner**

Email: [apsearch@storbeckpimentel.com](mailto:apsearch@storbeckpimentel.com)

Refer to code "MSUDenver-PEVPAA" in the subject line

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*Metropolitan State University of Denver is a unique, access-oriented campus community that values diversity, equity, and inclusion in all its forms.*

*Our student population consists of nearly 50% first generation students and over 45% students of color. We are a designated Hispanic Serving Institution located in downtown Denver.*

*We create an equitable learning and working environment in concert with individuals who consistently demonstrate commitment to equity and inclusion. We greatly value the diverse identities and perspectives of our students, faculty, and staff and recognize that in order to achieve a just and equitable society, diversity must go beyond simple representation. It requires critical inquiry and dialogue and a commitment to action. We strive to provide a culture of belonging for all community members to achieve personal and professional success.*