



Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs

WINFIELD, KANSAS





Southwestern College (SC) announces a search to fill the position of Associate VPAA (Assoc VPAA) on the College's main campus. The new Assoc VPAA will join an academic leadership team designed to build on the academic strength and creative style of SC's liberal arts-centered program.

Reporting to Southwestern's VPAA & Dean of the College, Dr. Ross Peterson-Veatch, and with an expected start date of early summer 2021, the new Assoc VPAA will be asked to coordinate and facilitate critical administrative needs of the main campus in Winfield, while embracing and enriching the mission and identity of the College.

The new Assoc VPAA will step into a role that includes many administrative and operational responsibilities that require extensive cooperation and collaboration with several campus offices currently supporting the academic program.

In addition to the care for detail needed in managing this strong administrative network, the Assoc VPAA will be encouraged to demonstrate leadership, creativity, and strategic thinking by working with the VPAA and the faculty on substantive issues of enrichment for the academic program. 🏛️



The Mission

Southwestern College provides a values-based learning experience that emphasizes intellectual, personal, and spiritual growth. Founded in 1885 by Kansas Methodists and now related to the Great Plains Conference of the United Methodist Church, the college offers bachelor's and graduate degrees on-ground and online. Southwestern College:

- + Prepares students for careers and for graduate studies with courses that foster critical thinking and effective communication and are characterized by meaningful professor-student interaction;
- + Employs emerging technologies that promote learning;
- + Strives to live by and teach a sustainable way of life;
- + Offers programs that embrace prior learning and facilitate career progression for working adults, members of the armed services, and persons in transition; and
- + Affords a residential learning experience abundant with co-curricular activities that build social awareness and interpersonal skills and cultivate an ethos of service and leadership. 🏛️

Delivering a rich relational academic experience rooted in excellent teaching





About Southwestern College

Southwestern College comprises two important facets – the main campus in Winfield, Kansas, which continues to appeal mostly to traditional-aged students and, since 1993, the Professional Studies (PS) program in Wichita, which serves working adults completing their undergraduate or graduate degrees in online classes. Enrollment for 2021-22 is expected to be more than 650 students on the main campus and approximately 1,500 PS learners over the course of the year.

Main Campus – Southwestern College has done an excellent job adapting, responding, and moving forward in the era of COVID-19. Focused on both safety and mission, Southwestern was the first higher education institution to re-open in Kansas, opening fully in-person on August 10. With an aggressive testing schedule, constant and direct communication, and an approach focused on culture change, the college finished the fall semester successfully and safely.

In large part, the college's success is owed to an active and quick-thinking COVID-19 Action Team supported by the administration and several key groups of faculty and staff. The COVID-19 Action Team began their work in the spring of 2020 and have continued to work diligently to this day, to help the college successfully navigate the anxieties and unique challenges presented by the pandemic. The campus is open and operating today with a balanced/surplus budget during this very challenging time.

Southwestern's 83-acre campus in Winfield provides a beautiful academic setting for students and faculty. Located on a hill overlooking the Walnut River Valley, the campus is notable for an abundance of trees (characteristic of the Winfield area) and its native limestone buildings. In the past 25 years, three capital campaigns have provided dramatic improvements in the college's facilities, while transforming the core of the Winfield campus. The college has begun a new capital campaign Forward Now and will launch the public phase of the fundraising effort this spring. Among the priorities are developing premier learning spaces in each academic building and initiating a true Honors Program.



In the past three and a half years Southwestern has implemented significant process changes in academic program administration, including robust annual academic program review, and review of program assessments. With regard to faculty, SC instituted a

minimum standard faculty load for all of main campus (4 courses per semester), established process guidelines for all faculty searches, and created a mini-grant program for faculty development funding. During the recent transition to online course delivery in Spring of 2020 and the return to in-person course delivery in Fall of 2020, faculty have developed and implemented guidelines for preparing and teaching courses in the COVID era.

Southwestern's United Methodist heritage and its commitment to a culture of a student-centered approach and service pervades all campus programs. The

college's commitment to an appreciation of all peoples of diverse cultural, ethnic, gender, and racial backgrounds has developed a student population in which 37% self-reported as white, 29% as underrepresented, and 3% as international. Partnerships with two Wichita inner-city middle schools have led to SC students serving as mentors for the youth and to summer camps that give young students a taste of life on campus and the realization that higher education is a possibility for them.

SC's academic divisions include Business, Education, Natural Sciences and Mathematics, Performing Arts, Social Sciences, Computer Science, Communication, and English. Undergraduate students choose from 35 majors and 27 minors.



About Southwestern College

Professional Studies – Southwestern was one of the first private colleges in the nation to embrace adult students interested in earning a bachelor’s or master’s degree in a non-traditional format. Established in 1993, Professional Studies began offering on-ground courses in Wichita.

In 1995, internet courses were added to provide further flexibility and accessibility for busy working adults.

Market demands continue to inform major PS offerings, with ongoing analysis of enrollments and interest allowing for quick start-up of such programs as security management, health administration, and cyber-crime investigation in addition to majors in business, nursing, and other more traditional fields. Currently, 17 bachelor’s degree programs are offered. Master’s degrees are offered in five business fields. The Division of Education in Winfield also offers several education programs at both the undergraduate and graduate level through PS. Non-credit training opportunities are also available.

In partnership with corporate, military, community and technical college partners, PS provides an opportunity for students to utilize prior college credit, experience gained through military service, and corporate training programs. A six-week course schedule is conducive to balancing professional and family demands. Faculty facilitate the sharing of knowledge as an integral part of the educational process. Although most PS learners are enrolled in asynchronous online classes, select courses are also offered on-ground in Wichita and at the U.S. Army’s Fort Riley.

As on the main campus, relationships also characterize the college experience for this population. Success coaches are assigned to each learner, guiding the student through course selections and credit options, while serving as the student’s mentor and advocate from admission through graduation. 🏛️



The PS infrastructure allows learners to earn a degree online while establishing meaningful relationships with an engaged faculty and focused team of support staff.



The Leadership Opportunity

for the Associate VPAA

Southwestern is committed to enrichment of a creative liberal arts-centered education. With many traditional strengths intact, including an accomplished and accessible faculty dedicated to teaching excellence, shared governance, and solid faculty leadership, the opportunity for the new Assoc VPAA is uncommonly attractive.

The academic program can continue to thrive under the work of a talented and eager academic facilitator and collaborator. Building more efficient administrative processes among and between academic affairs and student affairs, business affairs, admissions, and athletics will enrich SC's educational program. This primary role will make certain that the "academic trains" run on time. Responsibilities also include serving as the liaison officer for accreditation purposes and providing general oversight of institutional research, data, and information management work.

The Assoc VPAA will also work directly in support of the VPAA through involvement with division chairs and faculty and in developing a comprehensive agenda for dealing with future academic issues as they arise. Without anticipating all the areas in which they will make a difference in the life of SC, it is clear that "growing with this assignment" will be a distinctive opportunity in this role.

With the guidance of the VPAA/Dean of the College, the Assoc VPAA can have a positive impact on further enrichment at SC by demonstrating effective system level thinking. A vision for possible new connections within and between the main campus and PS, levels of faculty governance, student outcomes, and elements of resource development will be encouraged. 🏛️



Desired Attributes of the Associate VPAA

The successful candidate will possess a combination of personal qualities and professional experiences that will contribute directly to the role he/she will be asked to play in supporting the success of the VPAA and academic affairs at SC. Strong skills and experiences in administrative tasks specific to understanding the complexities of academic affairs administration on a small residential campus will be critical. Integrity, energy, empathy, a sense of humor, and a keen work ethic will all be important. An advanced degree is essential; a terminal degree would be additionally attractive.

Experience as an academic in positions which might include registrar, dean, department/division chair, or program director will all be considered substantive preparation for this assignment. Teaching experience would also be a positive attribute. *The Associate VPAA should also present:*

- + Effective skills as a facilitator and collaborator across several faculty and administrative areas;
- + Demonstrated ability to lead teams in solving complex problems;
- + An ability to analyze data in the course of decision-making;
- + Strategic thinking and planning skills;
- + Care for detail while also seeing “the big picture”;
- + Interpersonal skills necessary to develop and maintain strong working relationships, whether managing up, across or down;
- + Effective communication skills that include abilities to listen with care, write with clarity, and speak with affirmation;
- + Appreciation for and experience with effective faculty leadership and governance;
- + Intercultural competence that exemplifies an appreciation for diversity, equity, and inclusiveness in its many forms;
- + A leadership style that is action-oriented and fiscally responsible; and
- + An understanding of positive national trends in independent higher education.





Application Process

The search committee will be accepting nominations and applications on a rolling basis beginning in mid-February. For most favorable consideration, applications should be submitted by 12 Noon (CDT) Friday, March 19, 2021. The Assoc VPAA will be invited to begin work as soon as possible after June 1.

Dr. Thomas B. Courtice is the search consultant assisting with this search. Nominators and prospective candidates may contact him at Tom.Courtice@gmail.com. Application materials should include a letter of candidacy that responds to *The Leadership Opportunity* and *The Desired Attributes* detailed in this prospectus, a CV or resume, and the names and addresses of three references, none of whom will be contacted until a later stage of the search and not without the formal permission of the candidate.

Applications should be addressed to the Search Committee and submitted to: SCAVPAA@tbcsearchconsulting.com

All inquiries and applications will be received and evaluated in full confidentiality.

Southwestern College is an EEO/AA employer

