

SEARCH PROSPECTUS:

Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs



MAKE WAVES.

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THE OPPORTUNITY

Western Washington University ([WWU](http://www.western.edu)) invites applications and nominations for the position of Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs (VPBFA). WWU seeks a strategic and innovative leader with a broad experience in finance and administration and a strong track record in managing change in a dynamic environment.



ABOUT WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

The main campus of Western Washington University is located on 212 picturesque acres in Bellingham, Washington, a city of about 90,000 people located between Seattle, Washington and Vancouver, British Columbia. Nestled in the foothills of the Cascade Mountains and adjacent to the beautiful San Juan Islands, [Bellingham](http://www.bellingham.com) is nationally recognized for quality of life, [outdoor adventure](http://www.outdooradventure.com), and environmental stewardship. As the third largest university in the State of Washington, Western enrolls over 16,000 students in more than 160 academic programs at the Bellingham campus and seven satellite locations around the Puget Sound area.

Western, which first opened its doors in 1899, is perennially ranked among the top five public, master's-granting universities in the West, according to *U.S. News & World Report* college rankings. *Kiplinger's* ranks Western among the top 100 public colleges and universities in the nation that offer the best quality and affordability. *U.S. News and World Report* has named Western one of the most cost-efficient in the country among highly ranked universities and for several years in a row

the *Chronicle of Higher Education* has recognized Western as a "Great Place to Work." Western is particularly proud of its position as a leader in multidisciplinary environmental education and sustainable campus operations.

Western provides an active student-centered learning environment with a liberal arts and sciences foundation and robust co-curricular, internship, research, creative, and service learning opportunities. There is a widely shared vision that Western will be a higher education leader in a culturally responsive 21st century learning environment, applying its critical strengths to societal issues as well as creating a welcoming community for a diversity of people, ideas, and programs. To that end, Western has embraced a style that is collegial, transparent, and timely in its engagement and communication with on- and off-campus stakeholders.

Western is not only committed to the academic growth of its students, but to empowering them to be engaged and active agents of positive change in the

ABOUT WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY (CONT.)

world. Western is one of the top ranked universities in the nation among medium-sized universities for Peace Corps participation and for the number of its graduates awarded Fulbright Fellowships. Western is classified as a Carnegie Community Engagement University. Western has been designated a “Military Friendly School” for six consecutive years by *G.I. Jobs Magazine*.

Western Washington University is composed of seven colleges and the Graduate School:

- College of Business and Economics
- College of Fine and Performing Arts
- College of Humanities and Social Sciences
- College of Science and Engineering
- Fairhaven College of Interdisciplinary Studies
- Huxley College of the Environment
- Woodring College of Education

The University’s Strategic Plan, completed in 2018, defines aspirational goals for Western over the next several years around three core themes: advancing inclusive success, increasing Washington impact, and enhancing academic excellence. The strategic plan makes good on Western’s commitment to an equitable and transformative education for all students and its commitment to increasing Western’s impact in the state and beyond. (<https://president.wvu.edu/mission-strategic-plan>)

In 2017 Western Washington University adopted its [Sustainability Action Plan](#) to honor the way sustainability is interconnected with the University’s core values around social and economic justice. The vision is for sustainability to be embraced by the Western community and put into practice on campus as well as in home lives and communities. The plan reflects Western’s values and vision for the kind of world we want to live in and help create.



ABOUT THE DIVISION OF BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

The Division of Business and Financial Affairs (BFA) provides the range of human, fiscal, and capital services critical to the successful advancement of the University's mission and strategic directions. (<https://bfa.wvu.edu/>)

The Division's responsibilities include:

- Ensuring the financial integrity of the University
- Overseeing the University-wide budget planning process
- Acquiring maximum levels of state capital appropriations to address institutional needs, including engaging in long-range planning and developing the WWU Institutional Master Plan
- Ensuring occupational and environmental health and safety for faculty, staff, students and guests, including provision of emergency management services
- Providing public safety to faculty, staff, students and visitors, and safeguards for University property and assets, assuring a safe and secure educational environment
- Giving full accountability to the public on the utilization of public resources
- Exercising professional and sustainable stewardship of the University's physical infrastructure
- Providing oversight of human resource services and providing leadership ensuring all employees have a work environment that supports equity, inclusion and diversity
- Promoting positive interactions with community agencies and organizations
- Ensuring coordination with local, State and Federal agencies and regulatory compliance

The BFA Division has an annual budget of approximately \$23 million and consists of more than 330 permanent employees working in seven units:

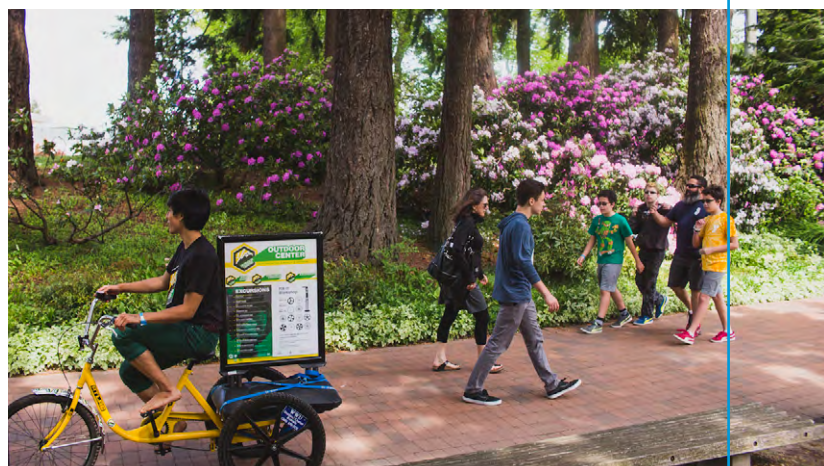
Office of Associate Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs provides oversight for Business Services, Financial Services, Business and Financial

Systems, and Risk, Compliance and Policy Services and other business auxiliaries. The Office also provides oversight of the University's financial internal controls and Enterprise Risk Management, and provides advice on financial strategy and policy.

Budget and Financial Planning has primary responsibility for the planning, development, implementation, administration, and oversight of the University's operating budget. Central elements of these functions include the preparation and submission of the institution's biennial operating budget request to the state legislature, preparation of annual allocation plans, and ensuring that financial resource decisions are in concert with the institution's strategic priorities.

Capital Planning and Development supports the University's mission through planning, development, budgeting and coordination of University-level capital budget policies and procedures, individual project proposals, the biennial capital request and 10-year Capital Plan, management of major and minor capital construction projects, and allocation and related administrative processes. The work of the unit also encompasses long-range planning and development of the WWU Institutional Master Plan.

Environmental Health and Safety provides oversight of occupational health and environmental management for the University, including chemical, biological, radioactive materials waste management and incident response and management of environmental health and safety programs.



ABOUT THE DIVISION OF BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS (CONT.)

Facilities Management leads the planning, development, maintenance and operation of Western's facilities and grounds, including auxiliary departments. The work of the unit also encompasses management of Western's utilities and energy and building control systems, management of minor construction projects including in-house renovations, and vehicle maintenance.

Human Resources is focused on advancing systemic approaches to attracting, retaining and developing a diverse workforce, and works collaboratively with the Office for Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance to support equitable and fair treatment for all employees. Human Resources services include diversity outreach and recruitment, classified staff labor relations, professional staff employee relations, classification and compensation management, payroll, human resources information systems, retirement and insurance, employee engagement, and organizational and professional development.

Department of Public Safety provides law enforcement, traffic control, event security, crime prevention programs, leadership for emergency planning and training programs, and other safety programs for the University community 24 hours-a-day, seven days-a-week.

Strategic Planning and Implementation is a focus in the Division; the Strategic Planning and Implementation Director leads and directs BFA division strategic planning to ensure the plan supports the University's strategic plan, oversees and supports the planning and implementation of divisional initiatives and projects, and leads the divisional communications, change management and performance metrics efforts. (<https://bfa.wvu.edu/bfa-strategic-planning>)

COMMITMENT TO WESTERN'S MISSION

The BFA Division supports Western's mission, which states that together with our students, staff, and faculty, we are committed to making a positive impact in the state and the world with a shared focus on academic excellence and inclusive achievement. BFA has embarked on a series of initiatives to improve the way we work, particularly focusing on diversity, equity and inclusion and employee engagement through our Strategic Plan.

We encourage applications from women, people of color, people with disabilities, veterans, and other candidates from underrepresented backgrounds and with diverse experiences interested in this opportunity.



ABOUT THE POSITION

The Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs (VPBFA) oversees an organization that includes all aspects of finance, business services, human resources, capital planning and development, facilities management, safety management, and public safety.

The VPBFA provides leadership, oversight and stewardship for University's financial resources, while ensuring absolute institutional integrity on fiscal and human resource matters. The VPBFA serves as a strategic advisor to the President and the University's executive leadership and recommends financial objectives, policies and practices that ensure a sound financial structure for the University.

The University seeks a strategic and innovative leader with broad experience in finance and administration. The successful candidate will have a strong track record in managing change in a dynamic environment, with superb management and communication skills, sound business acumen, and experience in building collaborations, with sensitivity to promoting the success of Western's increasingly diverse employees. The VPBFA must have the ability to adapt to Western's culture that values tradition, inclusion, service, and shared governance, while being astute in challenging the status quo in service to the educational mission and priorities of the institution.

Western Washington University has a commitment to diversity and equity and promotes an environment responsive to the diversity of groups represented at Western. The Vice President must be able to demonstrate a commitment to promoting and enhancing diversity and equity.

The Vice President serves as the institutional representative on financial matters to the Western Board of Trustees. In this regard, the VPBFA is involved in discussions regarding tuition setting, financial health, resource allocation, and approval of capital projects. The VPBFA serves as the primary representative to the University's Finance, Audit and Enterprise Risk Management Committee of the Western Board of Trustees.

The Vice President serves as a member of the President's Executive Team. As an institutional leader, the VPBFA is an active participant in shaping and advancing the priorities of the University, including being a significant contributor to promoting diversity, equity and inclusion goals across the institution.

The VPBFA works collaboratively with the executive leadership team on institutional matters, including but not limited to, Enrollment Management, Auxiliary Services, the WWU Foundation, and union contracts (faculty and classified staff).

The VPBFA represents the University at the state level in activities including appropriate committees of the Council of Presidents and other organizations of importance to the University and higher education.

Additional specific responsibilities of the position include:

- Provide a broad and compelling vision for the Division of Business and Financial Affairs
- Provide effective leadership to create and sustain an environment of respect, transparency, service excellence, effectiveness and collaboration within the Division
- Enhance BFA's commitment to contributing to a diverse and multicultural university, and to enhancing employees' multicultural competency skills
- Provide executive management with advice on risks and financial implications of decisions, the costs and tradeoffs of strategic priorities, and options for funding strategies
- Ensure effective strategies to address security and safety, emergency planning, and risk management
- Ensure that effective accounting controls are in place
- Negotiate major contracts for the University and review and execute existing contracts
- Engage effectively with the University's commitment to sustainable operations
- Engage collaboratively with local and state authorities on issues related to capital planning and development, transportation and safety, and with other partners in the community and region on matters of mutual importance

The Vice President position reports to and serves at the pleasure of the President. The position is a full-time, 12-month administrative position with an excellent benefits package. Salary is competitive and commensurate with experience.



POSITION QUALIFICATIONS

- At least ten years of progressively responsible financial and administrative leadership experience
- A Bachelor's degree, with a preference for an advanced degree
- Demonstrated experience in financial, capital and budget planning within a large, complex organization with some knowledge of the educational environment
- Understanding of the higher education culture and environment
- Superb written and oral communication skills that are both respectful of diverse viewpoints and can inspire stakeholders both inside and outside the Division of BFA
- Experience in advancing diversity, equity and inclusion; demonstrated leadership skills, ability and commitment necessary to cultivate work environments that are equitable and inclusive of employees with diverse cultural backgrounds and social identities
- Leadership skills to develop and sustain a high-performance team, including establishing and executing goals and priorities, and developing internal and external collaborations and partnerships
- High degree of integrity and trustworthiness

Additionally, preferred qualifications for the position include experience working in a large, complex organization within higher education and an understanding of state and public university system budget processes.



THE LEADERSHIP AGENDA FOR THE NEXT VICE PRESIDENT FOR BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

President Sabah Randhawa is looking to the next Vice President to focus very quickly on several key initiatives to position the University and its leadership to advance toward its 2025 vision.

- Explore best practices that would create formal and/or informal practices that will result in an effective partnership and complementary roles and responsibilities between the Vice President and the Provost for annual budget review and formulation as well as timely and responsive review of unforeseen needs or opportunities. Questions to be addressed, for example, might include clear articulation of the appropriate decision authorities of the President, Provost and Vice President; standing budget meetings of the Provost and Vice President to share information and resolve collaboratively pending decisions about process, policy, resource allocation, exception decisions, etc.; written strategic principles to assure sustainable fiscal choices to serve as the touchstone for prudent decisions; delegations of budget authority to/accountabilities of the Deans; annual budget presentations for the University, etc. It is envisioned that changes to current budget practices would be considered through an inclusive dialogue with key stakeholders.
 - Create an effective methodology to stress test the University budget by subjecting it to sensitivity analysis for different combinations of assumptions including state funding, pricing, enrollment, scholarships, operating and capital expenses, etc., and plan/budget for contingencies for a worst case scenario.
- The analysis would be broadly discussed with University constituencies and the Board of Trustees in the interest of transparency and inclusion.
- Examine other relationship models with the WWU Foundation that allow the two entities to maintain essential separation requirements as well as achieve closer collaborative ties that are consistent with the mission of each, particularly for public-private partnerships.
 - Initiate preliminary discussions to permit preparation and informed planning to update the WWU Institutional Master Plan.
 - Develop a deep understanding of the history, traditions, role and competitive position of Western Washington University within the State of Washington as they are today, and contribute thoughtfully to the University's future vision of itself and potential strategies that will define and realize a new, prominent, distinctive niche for the next chapter in the University's history.
 - Get to know and build personal relationships with faculty, staff and students and become visible and accept invitations to speak to or attend meetings of University groups. Create open, easy opportunities for transparency and exchange of information. Ask questions.
 - Gain a complete understanding of the expertise and many strengths of the leadership and staff of the Business and Financial Affairs team and foster innovation through delegation of authority with accountability; and identify hiring and promotion opportunities that enhance diversity and equity within the BFA work force.

THE LEADERSHIP AGENDA FOR THE NEXT VICE PRESIDENT FOR BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS (CONT.)

The current BFA strategic plan, developed in 2019 through an inclusive process involving the BFA leadership team and all staff, can be found at <https://bfa.wvu.edu/bfa-strategic-planning>. The plan identifies BFA's five overarching strategic priorities to help achieve Western's 2025 vision as follow:

- Partner with our Western community in planning and implementing changes in support of Western's 2025 vision
 - Communicate effectively with our Western community
 - Support Western's goals for diversity, inclusion and sustainability
 - Develop, support, and empower Business and Financial Affairs teams and staff to achieve excellence status
 - Continually improve and innovate business practices and systems
- Through consultation meetings and surveys conducted in early December 2020 with Western stakeholder groups for this search, the next Vice President will find the following additional specific leadership opportunities to:
- Collaborate with the Provost, other University leaders and stakeholder groups about creation of new transparent and effective ways to share and explain HR policies and resource allocation decisions
 - With visible leadership intentionality, identify innovative and impactful initiatives to advance diversity, equity and inclusion by championing equitable and humane business and administrative practices and embrace many different ways for inclusive workplace excellence
 - Plan and undertake effective organizational development strategies that reflect a high level of emotional intelligence in working with others to advance diversity, equity and inclusion, and within which all members demonstrate respect for one another and find encouragement to pursue pathways for personal growth
 - Exercise entrepreneurialism and, for example, partner with Deans and faculty members to create new revenue streams from delivering online programs and professional development programs for which there is market demand
 - Seek an understanding of and address the highest priority service and support needs of faculty, staff, students and families; and encourage regular communications, outreach and partnerships between BFA departments and staff with their University constituencies
 - Support BFA leaders and their teams to identify transformative goals for their department and themselves and achieve an inclusive, high level of esprit de corps, and create a mechanism that allows for clarification and coordination of roles for cross-departmental endeavors





DESIRED ATTRIBUTES, EXPERIENCE AND ABILITIES OF THE NEXT VICE PRESIDENT FOR BFA

The successful applicant should:

- Have experience and understanding of strategies for working effectively with elected and appointed officials and their staff at the state and local (city and county) level as well as with leadership and staff within the public higher education sector in Washington state
- Understand the role of regional comprehensive public universities in general and actively seek to learn about the distinctive and special culture of WWU that sets it apart from other such institutions
- Be a strong advocate for access and affordability for students and a champion for transformational efforts to streamline resource intensive business practices/release these resources to achieve other priorities
- Possess strong working knowledge of the Academic Affairs and Enrollment and Student Services enterprises, and a clear commitment to and focus on supporting and empowering them in the successful fulfillment of their missions
- Be quick to demonstrate an authentic personal commitment to establishment of the collaborative relationships that foster credibility and transparency and lead to a place at the table as a trusted advisor to University leaders
- Demonstrate decision-making that is informed by data yet reflects the intentionality and cultural competence to evolve WWU's culture to one giving heightened prominence to equity, compassion and innovation
- Bring strategic expertise to strengthen the financial position of WWU during an unprecedented period of uncertainty, reflecting a deep understanding of financial and non-financial drivers of sustainable fiscal performance and long-term fiscal viability
- Understand and be well-practiced in thorough, methodologically sound quantitative analysis for development of significant finance, business and capital recommendations and well-informed financial strategies, as well as insightful interpretations of stakeholder viewpoints, analyses of other complex data, and identification of potential risks or adverse consequences of decision options

DESIRED ATTRIBUTES, EXPERIENCE AND ABILITIES OF THE NEXT VICE PRESIDENT FOR BFA (CONT.)

- To continue on-going efforts at Western to improve transparency about budgets, show creativity in the preparation and delivery of a variety of user-friendly presentations and graphics that are tailored to many different audiences
- Appreciate and be comfortable participating within customary shared governance venues at a major university but also seek to understand nuances of the unique WWU culture
- Enjoy working directly with faculty, creating and engaging in opportunities for dialogue that fosters mutual understanding, respect and trust, and building bridges to strong relationships
- Demonstrate success working with and through unions and their leaders in promoting mutual understanding and positive relationships
- Respect and demonstrate meaningful responsiveness and follow-up to individual students, student groups, and parents
- Be a successful change agent within a complex organization, with a leadership style that reflects an effective combination of strategic focus; delegation of authority, with accountability to experts; inclusion of stakeholders to assure open information exchange, understand potential negative impacts that might be an unanticipated outcome, and achieve eventual ownership of change; sensitivity to human differences; patience with urgency; and persistence
- While never forgetting laws, regulations, policies and the fiduciary role, sees self as a “servant leader” and is seen by colleagues as authentic, approachable, a good listener who is open-minded and empathetic, a responsive problem solver, and receptive to suggestions and feedback; at the same time, reminds others that sometimes taking too much time to reach a consensus or a decision does have material cost consequences
- Knowledgeable and experienced in the art of negotiations, with successful outcomes that reflect creative yet sensible tradeoffs in the interests of the involved parties
- Is savvy as well as seasoned in recognizing and seeking to understand the varied internal and external politics that exist in large, complex organizations and how to navigate to avoid missteps
- Have the seasoned leadership knowledge and experience to be able to “look around corners” and “know when to take a step back”
- Bring an appropriate light-heartedness, a respectful sense of humor, and a comfort level in self to show others his/her heart to others occasionally



APPLICATION, NOMINATIONS AND INQUIRIES

Western Washington University is being assisted in this search by Academic Search. Nominations, applications, and inquiries may be sent in complete confidence to WWUVPbusiness@academicsearch.org. Initial screening of applications will begin immediately. The position is open until filled and applications received by **January 28, 2021** can be assured full consideration.

Application materials should include:

- Letter of interest that addresses how the candidate's experiences, skills and abilities fulfill the position requirements,
- Resume or curriculum vitae,
- A statement (maximum two pages) that describes your "demonstrated leadership skills, abilities, and commitment necessary to advance diversity, equity and inclusion and to cultivate work environments that are equitable and inclusive of employees with diverse cultural backgrounds and social identities." The statement should include your past professional and/or personal experience with, and plans for contributing to diversity, equity, and inclusion. For information on diversity and inclusion at Western, please see [Advancing Diversity and Inclusion at Western](#).
- Five professional references with full contact information and a note indicating the nature of your working relationship with each; references will not be contacted without the explicit permission of the candidate.

Nominators and prospective candidates also may arrange a confidential conversation about this opportunity with [Nancy D. Suttentfield](#), Senior Consultant, or [Disa Mason](#), Associate Consultant.

For more information about WWU please visit: www.wwu.edu

For more information about the Division of Business and Financial Affairs please visit: <https://bfa.wwu.edu/>

Western Washington University (WWU) is an equal opportunity and affirmative action employer committed to assembling a diverse, broadly trained faculty and staff. Women, minorities, people with disabilities and veterans are strongly encouraged to apply. In compliance with applicable laws and

in furtherance of its commitment to fostering an environment that welcomes and embraces diversity, WWU does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex (including pregnancy and parenting status), disability, age, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status or genetic information in its programs or activities, including employment, admissions, and educational programs. See WWU's Policy on [Ensuring Equal Opportunity and Prohibiting Discrimination and Retaliation](#). Inquiries may be directed to the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance, Title IX and ADA Coordinator, Western Washington University, Old Main 345 (MS 9021), 516 High Street, Bellingham, WA 98225; 360.650.3307 (voice) or 711 (Washington Relay); crtc@wwu.edu

WWU is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities upon request. To request this document in an alternate format or to request an accommodation, please contact [Human Resources Disability Services](#), 360.650.3774 or 711 (Washington Relay).

Annual Security and Fire Safety Report: This report is provided pursuant to the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act ("The Clery Act"). It includes statistics for the previous three calendar years concerning reported crimes that occurred on Western's campus; in certain off-campus buildings or property owned or controlled by Western; and on public property within, or immediately adjacent to and accessible from, the campus. The report also includes institutional policies concerning campus security, such as policies concerning alcohol and drug use, crime prevention, the reporting of crimes, sexual assault, and other matters. You can obtain a copy of this report in printed or alternate formats by contacting the Office of the Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services at vpsa.office@wwu.edu. The report can be found at: [Annual Security and Fire Safety Report](#).

All new employees must comply with the immunization policy and show employment eligibility verification as required by the U.S. Citizen and Immigration Service before beginning work at WWU. A thorough background check will be conducted on all new hires.

ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search is assisting Western Washington 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. For more information, visit www.academicsearch.org.



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