

SEARCH PROFILE:

VICE PRESIDENT FOR FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION/
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER



FAIRMONT
UNIVERSITY

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Fairmont State University, a four-year, public, comprehensive university, seeks a strategic, dynamic, and innovative administrative professional to serve as its Vice President for Finance and Administration/Chief Financial Officer (VPFA or CFO) and invites inquiries, applications, and nominations. The new VPFA would ideally take office in July 2026.

Reporting to the University President and serving as a member of the Executive Leadership Team, the Vice President functions as the senior officer and supervises the directors of the units within the Division of Finance and Administration: Grants and Sponsored Programs, Procurement, Accounting, and Facilities. This position is responsible for developing and implementing strategies to support the University, ensuring compliance with relevant regulations, and fostering an all-inclusive environment. The CFO will work collaboratively with other university departments and stakeholders to drive initiatives that enhance and support the University's mission.



ABOUT FAIRMONT STATE UNIVERSITY

Fairmont State began its long West Virginia history in 1865-67 as a normal school, becoming a State Teachers College from 1931-1944. The institution was called Fairmont State College from 1944-2004 when it then became Fairmont State University. The official motto is "Scholarship, Opportunity, Achievement, and Responsibility."

The University is a comprehensive, student-centered, state-supported institution offering many certificate and degree programs at the associate, bachelor, and master's degree levels via 50 degree programs and more than 90 fields of study. Located on a charming hilltop campus in Fairmont, West Virginia (Marion County), Fairmont State turns opportunity, passion, and hard work into excellence in a vibrant, close-knit campus community. At Fairmont State, students enjoy the opportunities offered by a large state university combined with the personal

VISION AND MISSION

Vision

Fairmont State University aspires to be a great place to learn, to work, and to call home.

Mission

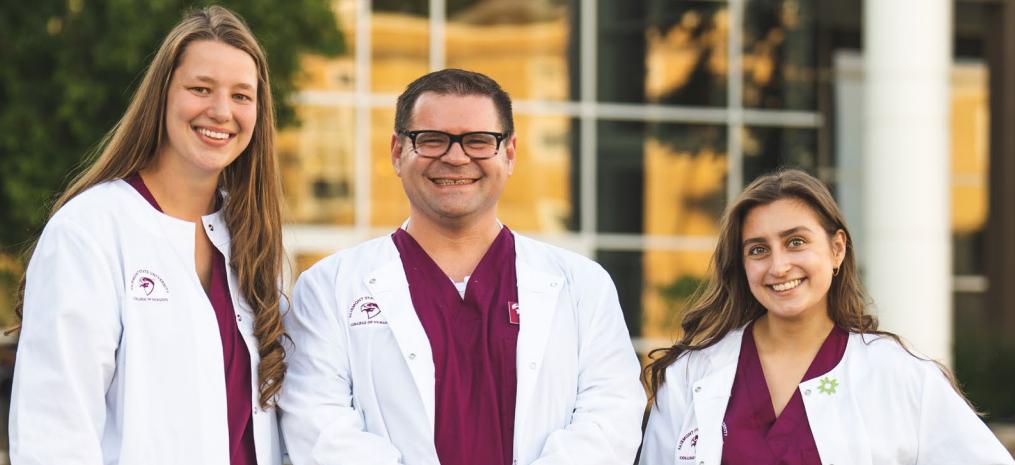
Fairmont State University educates engaged citizens in a community distinguished by opportunity, growth, and achievement, delivering transformational impact for West Virginia and beyond.

attention and campus atmosphere they might expect from a small, private school.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Fairmont State has finished its [Strategic Vision 2025-2035](#) which centers on making the University a great place to learn, work, and call home. The document was approved by the Board of Governors in October 2024 and incorporates the University vision, mission, three aspirational goals,

and 15 key initiatives. Using this document as a guideline, the University is creating 11 interconnected three-year implementation plans that will focus on academics, athletics, student affairs, community engagement, and others.



THE PRESIDENT

Dr. Michael “Mike” Davis is the 27th President of Fairmont State University. Since he began his tenure as the University’s leader in July 2023, he has enhanced the vibrancy of the campus environment, led strategic planning to ensure a strong Fairmont State future, strengthened relationships with constituents, and exercised the institution’s position as a regional public university to boost the prosperity of West Virginia communities.

President Davis has also strengthened our relationship with Fairmont, North Central West Virginia, legislators, education, and business leaders, and communities across the state. He has worked hard to break down barriers between the campus and surrounding community, while creating on-campus programming to make visitors to campus feel welcome in our community, including movie nights, fairs, entertainment, and [the Presidential Speaker Series](#). He’s worked closely with The Fairmont State Foundation (our fundraising organization) and under President Davis’s guidance, the Fairmont State University Day of Giving set fund-raising records in each of his first two years.

Prior to assuming the leadership role at Fairmont State, Dr. Davis was Chief of Staff at James Madison University

(JMU). In that role, Dr. Davis managed JMU’s presidential priorities and directed matters of policy and institutional importance, including strategic planning, institutional research, and accreditation. He was also regularly involved in external relations, crisis management and strategic communication, alumni engagement and advancement, diversity and inclusion leadership, fundraising, and fiscal management.

President Davis earned a Doctor of Philosophy in Communication Studies and a Graduate Certificate in Women’s and Gender Studies from the University of Georgia. He also holds a Master of Arts and a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Communication and Rhetorical Studies from Syracuse University. His academic research interests center on women in the Civil Rights Movement, debate pedagogy, presidential rhetoric, and argumentation and advocacy.



ACADEMICS

Fairmont State provides more than 90 programs of study offered through the following academic units: College of Liberal Arts, College of Science and Technology, College of Business and Aviation, College of Education, Health and Human Performance, College of Nursing, Honors Program, and Graduate Studies. In addition, the Regents Bachelor of Arts program (RBA) is a flexible, non-traditional academic program designed for adults and tailored to fit those in need of a degree for career advancement, for those with an associate degree with no corresponding baccalaureate degree available, or for those seeking personal fulfillment. Fairmont also offers dual enrollment courses that provide opportunities for qualified high school students to get a head start in low-cost college courses.

All students benefit from a student-to-faculty ratio of 15:1 with an average class size of 22. More than 90% of students receive some form of financial aid. Fairmont State University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). Some programs are also accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP), National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB), and Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN). The WV Higher Education Policy Commission (WVHEPC) provides oversight of new and existing degree programs at Fairmont State University.

CAMPUS AND FACILITIES

Fairmont State University includes more than 23 buildings throughout its 120-acre campus. Over the past several decades, new construction has included a student union, parking garage, and residence hall, and major infrastructure

improvements. These additions have increased accessibility and the beauty of the campus. Fairmont State also operates the Robert C. Byrd National Aerospace Education Center in Bridgeport (Harrison County).

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

For the sixth year in a row, the independent auditor reported that the University closed the fiscal year in strong financial standing. The audit gave the institution an unmodified opinion, the highest status it can receive.

In fiscal year 2024, the University had more than \$62 million in operating expenditures. The endowment, managed by the Fairmont State Foundation, as of December 31, 2025, is \$39.7 million. Moody's recently affirmed Fairmont State's A2 credit rating, citing "solid operating performance."

ABOUT FAIRMONT, WEST VIRGINIA

With a population of approximately 18,000 residents, Fairmont is the county seat of Marion County, where North Central West Virginia's rolling hills meet the thriving I-79 High Tech Corridor. Known as "The Friendly City" for the geniality of the community, Fairmont is a small city surrounded by nature. Nearby, winding, clear rivers cut through the green hills and mountains of Appalachia, giving the area and Fairmont State campus community unrivaled access to the outdoors, including biking, hiking, camping, rafting, climbing,

skiing – the region has it all.

Only a 90-minute drive from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, a three-hour drive from Columbus, Ohio, and a three-and-a-half-hour drive from Washington DC, residents have easy access to metro areas coupled with the advantage of living in a smaller, close-knit community. Fairmont is also close to dozens of cultural and historic areas and state parks.





LEADERSHIP AGENDA

The Vice President is responsible for developing and implementing strategies to support the University, ensuring compliance with relevant regulations, and fostering an all-inclusive environment.

STRATEGY, PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

- Act as Chief Financial Officer and strategic business partner to the executive leadership team.
- Work with President Davis to plan for entrepreneurial and innovative strategies.
- Serve as the main financial liaison to the Board of Governors and Finance Committee by effectively communicating and presenting critical financial matters.
- Engage finance committee and/or Board of Governors to develop short-term and long-term plans, projections, and budgets.
- Ensure timeliness and accuracy of financial and management reporting data for federal funders, foundations, investors, and the Board of Governors.
- Assess and evaluate the financial performance of the organization in regard to long-term operational goals, budgets, and forecasts. Provide insight and recommendations for both short-term and long-term growth plans.
- Identify, acquire, and implement systems/software to provide critical financial and operational information. Evaluate departments and make suggestions for automating processes and increasing work efficiency.
- Create and establish yearly financial objectives that align with the institution's plan for growth and expansion.

- Select and engage consultants, auditors, and investors.
- Recruit, interview, and hire the finance and accounting staff as needed.
- Participate in pivotal decisions as they relate to strategic initiatives and operational models.
- Mentor and develop a team of managers and/or directors; manage work allocation, systems training, performance evaluations, and the building of an effective and efficient team dynamic.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, BUDGETING AND FORECASTING

- Prepare and present monthly financial budget reports, monthly profit and loss by division, forecast vs. budget by division, and weekly cash flow by division.
- Review and analyze monthly financial results and provide recommendations.
- Identify, develop, and execute analysis of business initiatives, product launches and/or new service offerings.
- Supervise the creation of reports, software implementation, and tools for budgeting and forecasting.
- Manage cash flow planning processes and ensure funds availability.
- Oversee cash, investments, and asset management areas.
- Maintain outstanding banking relationships and strategic alliances with vendors and business partners.
- Utilize forward-looking models and activity-based analyses to provide financial insight into the institution's plans and operating budgets.

LEADERSHIP AGENDA (CONT.)

ACCOUNTING, GENERAL LEDGER, ADMINISTRATION AND OPERATIONS

- Supervise the accounting department to ensure the proper functioning of all systems, databases, and financial software.
- Review and ensure the application of appropriate internal controls, SOX compliance, and financial procedures.
- Oversee the preparation and timely filing of all local, state, and federal tax returns.
- Review all month-end closing activities, including general ledger accounts, balance sheet accounts, and overhead cost allocation.
- Enhance and implement financial and accounting systems, processes, tools, and control systems.
- Serve as a key point of contact for external auditors; manage preparation and support of all external audits.
- Approve large payables and sign checks; authorize large wires and ACHs.
- Supervise Accounts Receivable management and provide guidance relating to the collection process.
- Oversee Foundation sponsored and grant program.

PROCUREMENT, FACILITIES, AND RISK OVERSIGHT

- Provides strategic leadership and direction for Procurement and Facilities departments to align capital projects, purchasing strategies, and compliance with institutional goals.
- Provides executive oversight of procurement and receiving operations to ensure efficient, compliant, and cost-effective purchasing and receiving practices.

- Oversees University real estate transactions, including acquisitions, leases, and disposals, in coordination with legal counsel and senior leadership.
- Provides oversight of institutional risk management and insurance activities, including coordination with state risk management programs and external partners.
- Ensures procurement, facilities, and real estate activities comply with applicable state laws, regulatory requirements, and institutional policies.

GRANTS AND SPONSORED PROGRAMS OVERSIGHT

- Set the vision and strategic direction for grants and sponsored programs to advance the University's mission and priorities.
- Provide executive oversight in aligning sponsored funding initiatives with academic, research, and community engagement goals.
- Oversee policies, internal controls, audits, and corrective actions to mitigate financial and compliance risks.
- Provide executive oversight of proposal development, submission processes, award negotiation, and contract execution.
- Ensure effective post-award management, including budgeting, reporting, effort certification, and closeout.
- Monitor fiscal integrity of sponsored projects, including allowable costs, cost sharing, and indirect cost recovery.
- Serve as the authorized institutional representative and signatory authority for federal and state funding agencies and their related systems.



QUALIFICATIONS

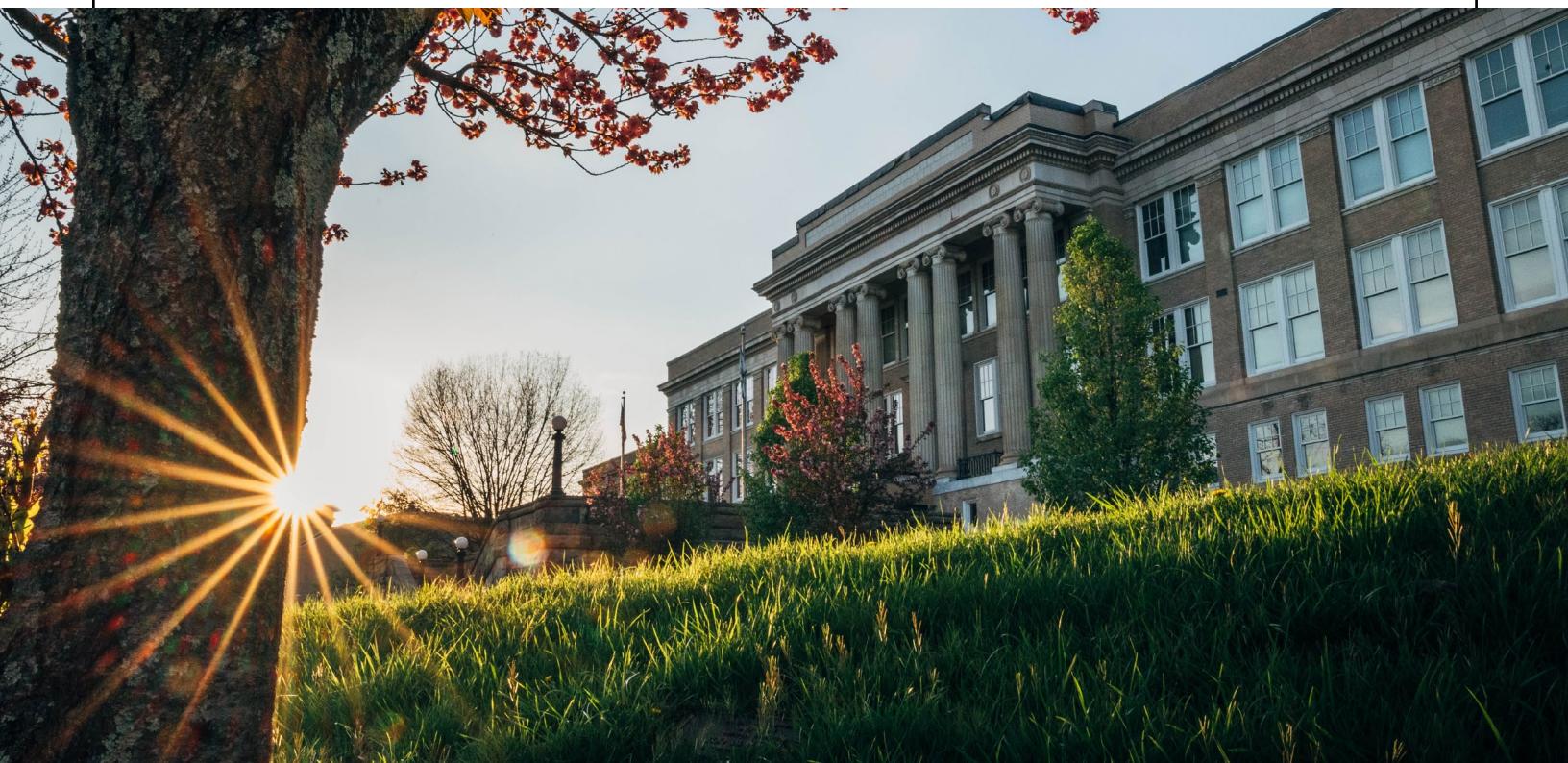
REQUIRED

- Bachelor's degree in accounting or finance
- Strong finance and accounting background
- Extensive financial leadership in a professional business or higher education institution
- Hands-on experience with entrepreneurial strategic planning and decision making

PREFERRED

- MBA or other relevant master's degree
- Experience coordinating with IT staff to manage and/or upgrade accounting systems; systems implementation is strongly preferred.
- A working knowledge of ERP systems
- Outstanding communication, interpersonal and presentation skills
- Demonstrated leadership ability, confidence, and executive presence
- Ability to motivate and support staff
- Excellent analytical, reasoning, and problem-solving skills
- Significant experience working with external auditors, internal controls, and compliance-related issues
- Proven ability to work as a team player, appropriately exhibiting a positive attitude and the ability to deal effectively with and flourish in an environment characterized by multiple complex factors, competing priorities, continuous improvement, ambiguous situations, and resource challenges

- Proven skills in supervising and evaluating assigned staff and in building a highly effective and productive working team
- Demonstrated expertise in project planning, development, and implementation
- Proven analytical abilities to drive fact-based decision making
- The ability to understand and promote the University's strategic and operational programs and goals
- Demonstrated high standards of integrity and ethics
- Highly developed organizational skills with proven ability to multi-task
- Ability to interpret and apply University policies and procedures as appropriate
- Mutual respect and tolerance for varying points of view that result in effective problem solving
- Personal proficiency and knowledge of and ability to utilize administrative applications of information technology.
- Proven analytical reasoning and problem-solving skills
- Demonstrated commitment to lead and manage change involving faculty and staff in positive and inclusive ways
- Demonstrated experience overseeing procurement operations and facilities and capital projects
- Experience managing institutional risk management and insurance programs





APPLICATIONS AND NOMINATIONS

Academic Search is partnering with Fairmont State University, and Dr. Pam Balch, Senior Consultant, is leading this search. All inquiries, applications, and nominations will be held in confidence. To learn more about this opportunity, potential applicants are welcome to submit their CVs to FairmontStateCFO@academicsearch.org to schedule a confidential call.

APPLICATIONS

Applicants should submit the following documents to <https://www.academicsearch.org/FairmontStateCFOApply>:

1. A detailed letter of interest to the Search Committee addressing the leadership agenda and qualifications outlined in the search profile.
2. A resume/current curriculum vitae (CV).

Although the position is open until filled, candidates should submit all application materials by Tuesday, March 24. Semifinalists will be invited for a confidential interview via Zoom.

NOMINATIONS

Although nominations are not required to be considered for this position, leaders who know of outstanding candidates are welcome to submit confidential nominations by sending an email to FairmontStateCFO@academicsearch.org. Please include the nominee's full name, position, institution/organization, and email address.

Fairmont State University does not discriminate against employees, students, or applicants on the basis of race, color, gender, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression/association, national origin, age, height, weight, religion, creed, genetic information, disability, or veteran's status, as identified and defined by law in employment, admissions, and educational programs and activities. Minorities/Women/Veterans/those with disabilities are encouraged to apply. Fairmont State University will not discharge or in any other manner discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because such employee or applicant has inquired about, discussed, or disclosed the compensation of the employee or applicant or another employee or applicant.

ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search is assisting Fairmont State 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.

