

SEARCH PROFILE:

PRESIDENT



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Florida Southern College invites applications and nominations in the search for a dynamic and innovative leader to serve as the College's next President. Florida Southern seeks a President who can continue the transformational legacy of President Anne Kerr and the Board of Trustees, under whom the College experienced a 20-year epoch of remarkable achievement and exceptional growth that has brought national recognition for excellence in academic programs, engaged learning, preservation, and stewardship.



ABOUT FLORIDA SOUTHERN COLLEGE

Founded in 1883, [Florida Southern College](#) (FSC) is the oldest private college in Florida. The College maintains its commitment to academic excellence through 70+ undergraduate programs and distinctive graduate programs in business administration, education, nursing, and physical therapy. With over 3,300 students, FSC is an award-winning national leader in engaged learning, boasts 30 NCAA Division II national championships, and maintains a 14:1 student-to-faculty ratio. Located in Lakeland, Florida, the College is home to the world's largest single-site collection of [Frank Lloyd Wright architecture](#) and was designated a National Historic Landmark in 2012. As a guardian of Wright's legacy, the College is second to none in the resources it holds and maintains and is ranked by The Princeton Review as the #6 "Most Beautiful Campus" in the nation. Florida Southern is an internationally recognized place of beauty and academic excellence that consistently receives high rankings in areas such as "Most Innovative," "Best Regional Universities in the South," and "Top Producer of Fulbright Winners."

Florida Southern College exemplifies the successful fusion of high quality, relevant professional curricula with the traditional liberal arts, putting it in the forefront of the evolving higher-education imperative: producing scholars and citizens who contribute in every way to society. This is achieved while maintaining the institution's traditional and close connection with its founding entity, the Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church (UMC).

HISTORY

Florida Southern College traces its roots back to 1883 when the Methodist Conference established South Florida Seminary in Orlando. After a series of moves and name changes, Southern College settled into its current home on the shores of Lake Hollingsworth in Lakeland in 1922 and was renamed Florida Southern College in 1935.

The campus comprises some 70+ buildings on 120 acres of land. Additionally, the College offers 5 off-campus apartment complexes providing [housing options](#) for upperclass students and the off-campus Campisi Physical Therapy Building. Thirteen of the College's structures were designed by master architect Frank Lloyd Wright with design and construction ongoing from 1938 through the 1950s. Mr. Wright said his design was to have all the buildings "flow from the ground in harmony with the natural landscape."

In that functional, yet exquisite environment, they exhibit the traits that Mr. Wright intended when he dubbed the campus "a child of the sun": organic union among the earth, sunlight, and local flora. The 10 Wright buildings, which include the iconic Annie Pfeiffer Chapel, are complemented by three other significant Wright-designed structures: the Water Dome; the Esplanades, 1.5 miles of covered walkways that connect most of the Wright buildings; and the newest addition to the collection, the Usonian House. Completed in 2013, the Usonian House is the first Frank Lloyd Wright-designed structure to be built for the original owners using the original plans on the intended site in over 50 years. The 13 structures make up the largest single-site collection of Frank Lloyd Wright architecture in the world.

ABOUT FLORIDA SOUTHERN COLLEGE (CONT.)

MISSION

The mission of Florida Southern College is to prepare students through dynamic engaged learning to make a positive and consequential impact on society. The mission also includes preserving the world-renowned Frank Lloyd Wright campus and visitor program.

VISION

Florida Southern College will achieve national recognition for providing a transformational education for students through its distinctive synthesis of liberal arts and professional programs and focus on student development through co-curricular and service-learning programs. It will become a national model for engaged learning in order to achieve the learning outcomes students need to thrive in a global society. As a result of its pragmatic approach to liberal learning, the global perspective of its academic programs, effective engaged learning pedagogy, and distinctive learning outcomes in all disciplines, Florida Southern will ascend to the top 25 colleges/universities in its Carnegie classification. Maintaining its affiliation with the United Methodist Church, Florida Southern will serve as the preeminent mid-size institution within the denomination, always striving to foster students' spiritual growth. Also, preserving the campus' iconic and significant historical Frank Lloyd Wright structures that serve as a "living museum" to accommodate the living-learning programs of the College, and promotion of educational programs to perpetuate the legacy of America's greatest architect, is included in the vision.

STUDENTS

With over 3,300 students from nearly every state and 48 countries, enrollment by gender is 36% men and 64% women. Over 24% of students are of a race/ethnicity other than Caucasian. The College student-faculty ratio is 14:1, and the average undergraduate class size is 18 students. The average GPA for incoming first-year students is 3.7, and the middle 50% test score range is 1130-1260 for the SAT and 23-29 for the ACT. Placement rates for graduates six months after graduation have averaged more than 90% (2013-2016) with steady improvement each year.

LAKELAND, FLORIDA

Ranked one of the "100 Best Places to Live in the USA" by U.S. News & World Report, [Lakeland](#), Florida, is a vibrant community conveniently located between Tampa and Orlando. As the corporate home to Publix Super Markets and a regional hub or distribution center for GEICO Insurance, Amazon, Lockheed Martin, and more, Lakeland is popular for its creative energy, stable economy, vibrant arts scene, strong job market, and high quality of life.

With a population just over 120,000, much of Lakeland's culture, recreation, and iconic neighborhoods are built around its 38 named lakes. There is a dynamic array of [things to see and do](#): [Bonnet Springs Park](#)- 168-acre privately developed park open to the public and featuring walking paths, elevated walkway, lagoon, activity areas for children, event venue, and home to the Florida Children's Museum, a leisurely stroll around the Francis Langford Promenade at Lake Mirror, a stop to take in the Hollis Garden – a botanical garden that is part of the Lakeland parks system, a visit to the Smithsonian-affiliated [Polk Museum of Art at Florida Southern College](#), or a walk through downtown Lakeland to enjoy quaint shops, casual restaurants, and pubs in the historic Munn Park town square.





ACADEMICS

Florida Southern is committed to a liberal arts education that provides opportunities for students to major in the arts and sciences, as well as in professional preparation programs. It offers undergraduate and graduate degrees, including doctoral degrees. The academic experience at Florida Southern places students at the center of their education by providing them the resources necessary to achieve success in college and life after college. Florida Southern's student-centered approach involves a commitment to engaged learning in the classroom and to a strong advising program that pairs students with faculty mentors. The College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

There are five schools at Florida Southern:

- The [School of Arts and Sciences](#) offers more than 65 majors and provides the foundations of a liberal arts education for all FSC students. With majors ranging from art history and dance to computer science, psychology, and chemistry, students are prepared for the international marketplace and studies in post-baccalaureate and professional programs through a curriculum that emphasizes interdisciplinary learning, research, service, and performance.
 - The AACSB-accredited [Barney Barnett School of Business and Free Enterprise](#) engages students in dynamic learning experiences that prepare and inspire them to become leaders who make a positive, consequential impact on society. In addition to undergraduate degrees in Accounting, Business Administration, Business & Free Enterprise, Economics & Finance, Healthcare Administration, and Sport Business Management, the Barnett School of Business offers two highly regarded online/hybrid graduate programs (MBA and Master of Accountancy) and several non-degree certificate programs.
- Ranked the “best private college program in the state” by the Florida Department of Education, the [School of Education](#) offers teacher education programs in elementary, secondary, art, and music education, as well as programs at the masters and doctoral levels. All education majors receive hands-on and high-tech learning geared toward preparing them to help others on a course to success. With a unique elementary academy and a preschool lab on campus, students are able to gain experience as early as their first education course.
- The [Ann Blanton Edwards School of Nursing & Health Sciences](#) offers accredited bachelor's and master's degree nursing programs, a doctor in nursing practice, and an exercise science program recognized by the National Strength and Conditioning Association. Classes offer hands-on training in the state-of-the-art Blanton Nursing Building, which features a cutting-edge nursing skills lab and a treatment-simulation. Students have the opportunity to participate in clinical rotations and internships at sites such as major medical centers, doctors' offices, high schools, and professional sports teams.
- The newest school on campus, the [School of Physical Therapy](#), provides a high-quality physical therapy doctoral program that prepares practitioners through dynamic, engaged learning experiences and equips them with skills to provide patient-centered, evidence-based care.

STUDENT LIFE

There are more than [100 campus clubs and organizations](#). The College hosts honor societies, social Greek organizations, interest clubs, professional and pre-professional organizations, religious groups, service clubs, intramural programs, and an active Student Government Association. The College offers a student newspaper, yearbook, and many music organizations – orchestra, chorale, symphony band, and jazz band – as well as the Vagabonds student theatre troupe.

Florida Southern offers 20 NCAA Division II intercollegiate sports and is a member of the eleven-school Sunshine State Conference. Men's sports offered at FSC are baseball, basketball, cross country, golf, lacrosse, soccer, swimming, tennis, and outdoor track. Women's sports offered are basketball, cross country, golf, lacrosse, soccer, softball, swimming, tennis, outdoor track, volleyball, and beach volleyball. [Moccasin teams](#) have won an impressive 30 NCAA Division II national championships, and over 300 student-athletes have been named to various Academic All-American teams.

POINTS OF PRIDE

- Top-tier rankings in *US News & World Reports* including top Regional University in the South (#11), Best Undergraduate Teaching (#13) and Best Value Universities (#18)
- The Barney Barnett School of Business and Free Enterprise, the School of Education, and the Ann Blanton School of Nursing and Health Sciences chosen as Colleges of Distinction for 2023-2024
- 100% employment/graduate school rate for graduates of the Barney Barnett School of Business and Free Enterprise
- Fully dedicated Department of Art History and Museum Studies, housed within our Smithsonian-affiliated academic museum, the Polk Museum of Art at Florida Southern College, the first program of its kind in the Nation
- The world's largest one-site collection of Frank Lloyd Wright architecture
- Roberts Academy (grades 2-8), the first transitional school in Florida for talented students with dyslexia
- One of the top athletics programs in NCAA Division II
- 45,000+ Alumni worldwide, including such notables as the Chairman and CEO of NASCAR, Jim France, the former Vice Chairman of Publix Super Markets, Barney Barnett, former Florida Supreme Court Justice, R. Fred Lewis, retired Chairman of the Board of AAA, Bob Sharp, PGA golfers Darron Stiles, Lee Jantzen, Marco Dawson and Rocco Mediate, and major league baseball players Greg Pryor, Matt Joyce, Rob Dibble, and Lance Niekro.





PRESIDENT

Florida Southern seeks a President who can build on the momentum achieved by Dr. Kerr and the Board to move the institution into an even more vital future. Dr. Kerr's successor will embrace the UMC connection and understand and appreciate the integral nature of its relationship to the College, while understanding that FSC welcomes individuals from all faith backgrounds. Moreover, an incoming leader must be an exceptional communicator who will work collegially with the governing body, faculty, staff, students, and all other constituents of the institution. The next President, while honoring the work already completed, will provide a dynamic vision for the future of FSC and will understand the unique challenges that higher education is experiencing, particularly those facing small, independent institutions. The next President must also be an enthusiastic advocate for Florida Southern and its historic mission, particularly with external partners and donors.

DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS AND LEADERSHIP AGENDA

The next President of Florida Southern College must be prepared to seamlessly integrate collaborative, visionary leadership with institutional goals, as the campus continues its transformative journey toward a future defined by excellence in education and a national model for engaged learning. That journey will require a leader with the following characteristics:

- Strategic Vision: As a strategic thinker, the President must be able to envision the future and be capable of understanding and implementing change effectively. The incoming President will stand as a champion of FSC's dynamic culture and campus, while also advancing FSC as a distinctive and ever-evolving institution. This includes acting as a committed steward to the Frank Lloyd Wright collection, preserving and championing its historical and artistic significance, while integrating this rich legacy into the very fabric of FSC's institutional identity.
- Financial Acumen and Operational Excellence: The next President will bring advanced financial knowledge and operational acumen to ensure the continuing fiscal strength of FSC to nurture both academic excellence and institutional growth. This will allow the College to continue to thrive as it prepares students to make a positive and consequential impact on society.
- Entrepreneurial Spirit: The President will foster innovation aligned with the College's vision for achieving national recognition in providing transformational educational experiences. This involves driving innovation in academic programs and ensuring the sustainable growth and enhancement of FSC's distinctive institutional character.
- Fundraising and External Engagement: The President must possess sufficient fundraising and community engagement expertise to build and nurture relationships with donors, alumni, and the community. The President must be an outstanding communicator who can effectively share FSC's unique story with various constituencies to foster strong connections within and outside the College community and build both annual fund and endowment resources.
- Higher Education Leadership: The next President must be ready to lead in a dynamic and changing higher education landscape and be prepared to lead the College to continuing success and health through the varied challenges presented by these shifting circumstances.
- Decisive and Collaborative Team Leadership: The President will lead collaboratively while making decisive decisions when necessary. By fostering a collaborative spirit, within the senior leadership team, faculty, staff, students, and the broader College community, the President will contribute to the continuing success of Florida Southern College by aligning the distinctions of the campus with the vast opportunities of the region.



PROCEDURES FOR APPLICATION AND NOMINATION

The College is being assisted by Academic Search. Applications should consist of a substantive letter of interest, a CV, and a list of five professional references with full contact information. No references will be contacted without the explicit permission of the candidate. Applications, nominations, and expressions of interest can be submitted in confidence to: FSCPresident@academicsearch.org

The position is open until filled, but only applications received by **Wednesday, April 10, 2024**, can be assured full consideration. Confidential discussions about this opportunity may be arranged by contacting consultants [Ann Die Hasselmo](#) and [Chris Butler](#).

Florida Southern College has a strong commitment to the principles of equal employment opportunity. The college recruits, hires, trains, transfers, promotes and compensates individuals and makes all personnel decisions without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, national origin or ancestry, marital status, veteran status, or physical or mental disability unrelated to an individual's ability to perform the job, in accordance with applicable law.

ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search is assisting Florida Southern College 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.



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