

SEARCH PROFILE:

PRESIDENT



FRONTIER NURSING
UNIVERSITY®

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Frontier Nursing University and its Board of Directors invites applications and nominations for its next President, succeeding a successful 22-year tenure of President Susan Stone. Frontier Nursing University is a leader in online and graduate nursing and midwifery education with a total enrollment of nearly 2700 students. The University seeks a visionary, strategic, entrepreneurial leader who will be mission-focused, results-oriented, innovative, and collaborative in advancing the mission and vision of Frontier Nursing University. The new President will identify new frontiers for the University to serve its students and meet the challenges occurring in higher education and health disparities in rural and underserved populations. The new President will serve the University through in-person, on-site and community engagement and will need to live in the greater Lexington region of Kentucky. The new President is expected to assume office in Summer, 2024.



ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY

Frontier Nursing University's roots are anchored as a part of the Frontier Nursing Service (FNS). Founded in 1925 by Mary Breckinridge in Leslie County, Kentucky, FNS introduced the first nurse-midwives to the U.S. Riding horses up mountains and across swollen streams, the FNS nurses brought modern healthcare to one of the poorest and most inaccessible areas in the U.S. Mrs. Breckinridge demonstrated that care provided by nurse-midwives to families in the region would drastically cut infant and maternal mortality rates, as well as morbidity and mortality in the community.

The Frontier Graduate School of Midwifery was subsequently established in 1939. Since that time, FNU has grown to become one of the largest not for profit universities in the United States for advanced nursing

and midwifery graduate education. By its development of the first distance learning nurse-midwifery program in the country in 1990, it became a pioneer in the delivery of distance education, staying true to its mission of providing care to rural and underserved areas.

MISSION, VISION, AND CULTURE OF CARING

Mission

The mission of Frontier Nursing University is to provide accessible nurse-midwifery and nurse practitioner education that integrates the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion. We transform healthcare by preparing innovative, ethical, compassionate, and entrepreneurial leaders to work with all people with an emphasis on rural and underserved communities.

The Frontier Nursing University Vision:

To continually improve our status as a center of excellence for midwifery and nurse practitioner education.

- Values and Culture of Caring:
- Professionalism
- Inclusivity
- Respect
- Positive Communications
- Mutual Support

FNU's Culture of Caring drives these values into our talented and diverse community of students, alumni, faculty, staff, and preceptors. We are inspired by a culture of caring among all members of our university community, and it strengthens our focus on our mission of educating nurse midwives and nurse practitioners to deliver quality health care to underserved and rural populations.



ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY (CONT.)

STRATEGIC PLAN

Frontier Nursing University's strategic plan is a rolling 5-year plan with yearly individual work plans and objectives. The goals usually do not change but the objectives may change dependent on progress in meeting the goals or the need to establish new goals. Each department subsequently develops a Department Assessment Plan in which objectives and measures are set to determine achievement of the overall university strategic plan. For 2024, the following Goals were approved:

Goal 1: Continue to develop, evaluate and improve programs and services that further our mission

Goal 2: Create an environment that promotes diversity, equity and inclusion, and promotes the success of all community members

Goal 3: Build strategic relationships and partnerships with clinical sites and preceptors, focusing on rural areas

Goal 4: Continuously improve and maintain facilities to meet the needs of students, faculty, and staff

Goal 5: Use technology to ensure improvement and attainment of service excellence to the community

Goal 6: Ensure the financial strength and growth is sufficient to meet the needs of the University.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Frontier Nursing University is deeply committed to fostering an inclusive environment where diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) efforts are prioritized across all aspects of the institution. Our commitment to DEIB is rooted in the understanding that diverse perspectives enrich our learning and work environments. Through ongoing initiatives and programs, we strive to create a welcoming and inclusive community where everyone's unique perspectives and contributions are celebrated.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) objectives are integral components of Frontier Nursing University's annual strategic plans. DEI principles permeate our organizational culture, shared governance, and policies. In recent years, numerous DEI-focused committees, the President's DEI Task Force, and two DEI Fellowship programs have been established. Each of these initiatives is equipped with clear mission statements and measurable objectives aimed at embedding DEI principles in every aspect of the university.





ACADEMICS

From the beginning, Frontier Nursing University sought to meet the needs of prospective students who want to remain in their communities to complete graduate nursing education and meet their professional goals. FNU's flagship program is the nurse-midwifery program. The inception of the distance program was begun in 1989 with the goal of making midwifery education accessible to nurses who were not located near existing, traditional programs. The program currently has 867 students enrolled of which 235 are matriculating in their clinical experience.

In 1970, FNU opened a FNP program. It later transitioned to a distance format mirroring the midwifery program in 1999. The FNP program has 544 students of which 145 are in clinical. A post graduate certificate as a Women's Health NP began in 2003. An MSN was offered in 2005. Current enrollment in the WHNP program is 305 students with 67 in clinical. The Psychiatric Mental Health NP program opened in 2017. It has rapidly grown to 685 students with 196 in clinical. There are more PMH PGC students in the PMH program as PMH is a sought-after post graduate certificate (PGC).

In all of the MSN/PGC programs, the didactic portion of the program of study is front-loaded. At the completion of all didactic courses, students return to campus for a one-week skills intensive in preparation for clinical rotations (Clinical Bound).

POINTS OF DISTINCTION

- INSIGHT Into Diversity Health Professions Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) Award (2018-2023)
- American Association of Colleges of Nursing Diversity, Inclusion, and Sustainability in Nursing Education Leadership Award (2021)
- Great College to Work For from the Great Colleges to Work for Program (2021-2023)
- One of five universities recognized by Diverse Organizational Impact and Transformation (DOIT) for progress in "Cultivating Diverse, Equitable and Inclusive Institutional Climates With Intentionality." (2021)
- International Distance Learning Award presented by the United States Distance Learning Association (2021)
- One of 50 schools selected by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing to participate in a national initiative designed to foster inclusive learning environments and build a more diverse nursing workforce. (2022)
- American Association of Colleges of Nursing Inclusive Excellence, Belonging, and Sustainability Award (2023)
- Academic Healthy Work Environment Award From Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing (2024)
- Certification rates for practitioner programs consistently exceed the national average

ACADEMICS (CONT.)

Additionally, FNU offers a post-masters' Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) via distance delivery.

Students enroll from all over the United States. The top five states for enrollment include: Florida, North Carolina, Oregon, California and Washington. The number of students in a rural and/or underserved area is a majority of the student population (2,060).

FACULTY

Faculty (over 90% full time and almost all doctoral-prepared APRNs) typically teach in either the didactic courses or in the clinical courses. FNU employs about 160 faculty that live all over the country. Faculty attrition is low and vacant positions are filled rapidly. Faculty (APRN) must possess an unencumbered RN license and maintain specialty certification in their specialty field. Regional Clinical Faculty (RCFs) are strategically hired to serve as the faculty for students in clinical and act as liaisons between clinical sites and preceptors and the university. Regional clinical faculty live in the regions where the students they supervise are located. It is common for RCFs to hold multiple state RN and APRN licenses to comply with state rules and regulations when operating in that state.

CLINICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

At the Frontier Bound orientation, new students are introduced to the Clinical Advising Team. The Clinical Advisors assist students with identification of clinical sites and preceptors (the database called the Clinical Map contains 1000s of sites and preceptors throughout the country). They work in group sessions and individually with students to identify potential sites and

preceptors. The clinical advisors work closely with the Credentials Officers to secure contracts with clinical sites and preceptors and vet these as suitable for our students. The RCFs also serve as resources for students utilizing their professional connections and experience with sites within their regions.

FNU has several clinical partners with whom there are relationships and agreements to take Frontier students. Some of these partnerships were developed as part of Federal Grant activity and others due to the efforts of our Clinical Outreach and Placement Team. Employers have reported a high level of satisfaction with FNU graduates and seek Frontier out when recruiting. FNU is also in conversations for partnerships in recruitment of midwives in rural communities identified as maternity care deserts.

ACCREDITATION

Frontier Nursing University meets the rigorous standards of regional accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) and has been continuously accredited since 2004. The university also holds specialized national accreditation for its programs of the Doctor of Nursing Practice, the Master of Science in Nursing and the post-graduate Certificate nursing programs, including the nurse-midwifery, family nurse practitioner, psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner, and women's health care nurse practitioner tracks by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN). The midwifery program is also accredited by the American Commission of Midwifery Education (ACME). FNU is also certified by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) and is a Continuing Education Provider.





CAMPUS AND FACILITIES

Frontier Nursing University sits on 217 rolling acres on a beautiful, newly renovated Versailles campus in Woodford County, adjacent to Lexington, a thriving city in Kentucky. The new campus was opened in 2021 following the pandemic, having moved from its original site in Hyden, Kentucky. The campus has 16 buildings, including student lodges that provide housing for the Frontier Bound orientation and Clinical Bound immersive clinical experience, student services, a library, state-of-the-art simulation center and simulation labs. Additional facilities

include support services, an administration building, a Community Center, the Bell Pavilion, a President's House for hosting events and receptions, a Reflection Center, separate houses for faculty and Deans when they are on campus, and a Welcome Center. While distance delivery is the modality for the graduate programs, being on-campus for the Frontier Bound orientation and the Clinical Bound immersive clinical provides a unique opportunity for building community as a cohort of graduate students beginning their graduate education.



ABOUT VERSAILLES AND THE GREATER LEXINGTON AREA

The University is located close to the Lexington airport and is situated in a quiet rural area of Versailles, the county seat of Woodford county, known for its beautiful horse farms. The campus is adjacent to Lexington, the 2nd largest city in Kentucky and known as "Horse Capital of the World." It is home to several universities, including the University of Kentucky and other universities/ community college and the noted Keeneland Thoroughbred racecourse.

For more information on Versailles and the Lexington region:

[Welcome - Versailles \(klc.org\)](https://www.klc.org)

[Lexington, Kentucky: Horse Capital of the World® \(lexingtonky.gov\)](https://www.lexingtonky.gov)

FINANCIAL AND FUNDRAISING OVERVIEW

The University, underpinned by a robust financial framework, consistently demonstrates strong fiscal performance. With gross revenue averaging around \$45 million annually, FNU meticulously budgets for a net operating profit ranging between 4-6% as a proportion of revenue. Notably, FNU has surpassed these targets, achieving operating profits of 11.85% for the fiscal year ending April 30, 2022, 5.98% for the fiscal year ending April 30, 2023, and is on track to conclude the fiscal year ending April 30, 2024, with a projected 13.19% operating profit. Surplus over budget has been sustained due to increased enrollment/demand, prudent spending, and returns in the stock market.

In the current fiscal year, revenue predominantly stems from tuition and fees, comprising 95% of the total. Additionally, FNU typically garners approximately \$1 million in donations and \$1 million in grants/scholarship income, with a recent allocation of an additional \$1 million for the Maternity Care grant.

Amidst the financial landscape, the University and Foundation collectively manage assets of nearly \$80 million invested in the stock market. Net operating profits are reinvested, augmenting this portfolio every quarter. The assets invested are restricted as follows:

- \$6 million restricted for scholarships
- \$11 million allocated to endowed funds supporting specific healthcare, facility, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), and nursing education initiatives, this can include scholarships as well
- \$13.5 million restricted to Chair positions
- \$20 million serving as collateral for the Versailles Campus Loan
- \$28.5 million unrestricted funds, facilitating flexibility in meeting evolving institutional needs and priorities.

Together, these financial assets underscore the University's commitment to financial stewardship, strategic investment, and the advancement of its academic mission. The Foundation and FNU continue to uphold their shared dedication to fiscal responsibility, ensuring the enduring vitality and sustainability of their operations.

ALUMNAE/

At FNU, the alumni base totals over 9,000 individuals spanning the United States and beyond. The Office of Advancement is dedicated to fostering a culture of engagement and generosity, forming enduring partnerships with alumni and donors who share a commitment to nurse-midwifery and advanced practice nursing. While the alumni giving rate is currently 2.5%,



successful fundraising has garnered monies from private donors and federal grants to support critical areas such as scholarships, campus renovations, operational needs, and initiatives focused on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Strategic marketing efforts include engaging social media content, blog stories, and the widely read Quarterly Bulletin magazine sent to over 13,000 households four times a year.



LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Frontier Nursing University's Board of Directors comprises a distinguished group of 17 leaders in health care, business, alumnae/i and friends of the College. The Board meets four times annually and offers direction and oversight with fiduciary responsibility for the University. The powers of the Board of Directors include such matters as: mission statement, degree programs, faculty promotion, tuition, room and board rates, operating and capital budgets, endowments, fund raising, and strategic plans.

The President of the University is appointed by and responsible to the Board which delegates to the President the general supervision and management of the University. The President is supported by an experienced and talented Executive Cabinet Team that oversees all instructional and operational aspects of the University: Chief Operations Officer, Dean of Nursing, Dean of inclusive Excellence and Student Success, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Advancement Officer, and Chief Information and Digital Officer.

Shared Governance: Frontier Nursing University follows a model of shared governance which is comprised of the Board of Directors, President, Faculty/Staff Council, Student Council, Academic and Institutional Standing Committees, Subcommittees, and Ad hoc Work Groups. The purpose of Shared Governance is to facilitate the involvement of its members in supporting the mission of Frontier Nursing University and promote the vision of FNU by creating and sustaining a mutually beneficial, effective, satisfying, and supportive environment for all employees of the University. This purpose is accomplished through communication, joint planning, shared authority, and collaborative responsibility for decision making within FNU.



PRESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP AGENDA

Frontier Nursing University offers a unique opportunity for presidential leadership. Building on the successful 22-year tenure of President Susan Stone, the University is well-positioned for the next President to enhance its strengths and expand into new frontiers to address the challenges facing higher education and health disparities and access for rural and underserved populations.

The University seeks an innovative and inspiring leader who will build on the momentum and growth of the past years, expand its assets and unique contributions, and importantly, communicate a vision that inspires the university community, campus, alumnae/i, and philanthropic community. Key priorities for the next President include the following:

Strategically differentiate and explore new frontiers for the University in the future aligned with the mission, building on its strong legacy as a leader in midwifery and nurse practitioner education.

Frontier Nursing University has been a national leader in midwifery education and nurse practitioner education, being one of the first to start distance education for graduate nursing practitioners. With increasing competition in higher education, new cutting-edge options for delivery and use of technology and artificial intelligence will present new opportunities and potential new programs for advanced education in the future. The next President will have the opportunity to engage the entire FNU in developing its next strategic plan for the University's future, and collaboratively develop a compelling vision for FNU that builds on a strong legacy of change to move the University forward in innovative programs and projects that address student and community needs to address the health disparities of a diverse, rural, and underserved community.

Deepen the University's commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. The higher education landscape continues to evolve, educating an increasingly diverse society. Diversity, equity and inclusion is integral to the mission of FNU and has been demonstrated across multiple facets. As a clear priority for all the community, it has shown encouraging results, with diversity of students increasing from 9% to over 30% in a short period of time, the establishment of the Nurse Educator DEI faculty fellowship program, and receiving recognition and awards, as noted by consecutive years of recognition since 2018 with the Health Professions Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award. The new President will have the opportunity to build on this success and take the university to new heights in diversity, equity and inclusion in programmatic initiatives and impact on delivery to underserved populations.

Build and expand fundraising capacity of the University for increasing the endowment, scholarship support and strategic investment. Philanthropy and fundraising will be a high priority for FNU's next President. The new President will need to work closely with the advancement team, foster enhanced alumnae/i engagement to continue to grow the endowment and funded student scholarships. There will also be a need to expand friend-raising and relationship-building among the foundations and business community in the region and nationally. With a new vision and innovative initiatives for the future, the next President will have a platform to expand and raise visibility and donor support and build long-term relationships with new sources of funding to identify future campaigns and build on previous success.

PRESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP AGENDA (CONT.)

Leverage and elevate the visibility and profile of Frontier Nursing University in the region and beyond. An important priority for the next President is to engage and leverage the innovative and ground-breaking delivery of excellent midwifery and nurse practitioner education to raise the profile and distinctiveness of Frontier. The University has a national reach with student enrollment and alumnae/i but is not at the desired level of recognition as a national leader in graduate nursing education. While the University has a well-developed system of clinical site development and outreach, this is an ever-present need in expanding programs of delivery at FNU. Additionally, opportunities to be the voice and public policy advocate for Frontier's programs and women's healthcare is an important role for the next leader. With a presidential transition, this provides an excellent opportunity and platform to introduce a new leader to the broader community and partner with the health care and business community in key initiatives that address health care practitioner access needs and rural and underserved communities.

Expand partnership development that furthers the mission of the University to support students and address health disparities in rural and underserved communities. Partnerships are critical for the University to ensure quality education where most students come from rural and/or underserved communities. Partnerships

with other institutions and organizations that are mutually beneficial are important in consideration of the changes occurring in the future for higher education, and healthcare. In addition to furthering the mission of Frontier, possibilities for establishing an on-campus model practice clinic where students (midwifery, family nurse practitioners, women's health NP, and psychiatric-mental health NPs) and licensed practitioners provide care in collaboration with clinical partners is an option. The new President will have the opportunity to explore such options in concert with the Board of Directors and Cabinet in the future.

Reinforce the strong sense of community and strengthen a culture of transparent communication during presidential transition. A clear distinctive hallmark of Frontier Nursing University is the strong sense of community, belonging and dedication to the mission among students, faculty, and staff. However, following a successful, long-serving President, the new President will need to be a visible and present leader, apply strong listening and communication skills, while moving forward strategically for the University. The President will be expected to engage and affirm the strong shared governance system in place at FNU and be an active member of the surrounding Versailles and Lexington communities.





LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS, ATTRIBUTES, AND SKILLS

The next President of Frontier Nursing University must meet the following requirements:

- Doctoral degree with preference for nursing major
- Registered Nurse with an unencumbered license in Kentucky or eligible for such. Preference is for an APRN
- At least 5 years' administrative and leadership experience (Preferred academic experience as an academic President, Department Chair, Associate Dean, Dean, Provost, Associate or Assistant Provost)
- Other senior level health care leadership experience may offset some of the academic experience
- Documented DEI experience

In addition to meeting these requirements, the ideal candidate will bring many of the preferred characteristics, competencies, and experiences listed below:

- **Excellent communicator with strong relationship building skills** and the ability to develop relationships and communicate effectively with students, faculty, staff, the Board of Directors, alumnae/i, and donors, and externally with the broader community, and government leaders. Demonstrates a relational leadership style with visibility, authentic engagement, collaboration, and effective conflict management.
- **A visionary leader with an entrepreneurial and innovative mindset for the change needed in rapidly changing higher education and healthcare landscapes.** Display a track record of creativity, innovation and strategic thinking, planning, and execution as an executive leader. Demonstrate an ability to be agile and flexible in moving through change initiatives.
- **A demonstrated commitment to fostering and growing diversity, equity, and inclusion** across the University with particular focus on diverse, rural, underserved populations.
- **Executive level experience with financial and business acumen** in leading and managing a complex organization with a national reach. Experience in managing a senior team and working effectively with advisory and Board of Directors/Trustees.
- **Successful fundraising experience** including developing philanthropic relationships with key groups (alumnae/i, foundations, community organizations, and others) and in **partnership development** with businesses, health care organizations/foundations. Displays experience in garnering new resources to support key objectives/goals.
- **Demonstrated experience and advocacy skills** in advancing health policy to support local, state, and national changes needed in nurse practitioner education/training and healthcare access in rural, underserved communities.
- **Experience and ability to embrace the values** of the University displayed in the *Culture of Caring* ethos.
- **A person of integrity and authenticity with the ability to build trust.**



APPLICATIONS, NOMINATIONS, AND INQUIRIES

Frontier Nursing University is being assisted by Academic Search. Applications, nominations, and expressions of interest may be submitted in confidence to: FrontierPresident@academicsearch.org.

Applications should consist of:

- a detailed letter of interest that addresses the expectations discussed in the leadership agenda;
- a complete curriculum vitae (CV);
- the names and contact information (phone and email) of five professional references, none of whom will be contacted without prior notification to the candidate.

The position is open until filled, but only applications received by **May 6, 2024** can be assured full consideration.

Confidential conversations about this opportunity may be arranged by emailing one of the Senior Consultants for the search:

Jerry Israel at Jerry.Israel@academicsearch.org or Suzanne Mellon at Suzanne.Mellon@academicsearch.org

Frontier Nursing University is dedicated to the equality of opportunity within its community. It is the policy and practice of the University to provide equal opportunity to all persons. The University does not discriminate against a person because of race, color, age (as defined in the Age Discrimination in Employment Act), religion, gender, pregnancy, disability, national origin, citizenship, genetic information, veteran's status, sexual orientation or any other characteristic protected by law.

ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search is assisting Frontier Nursing 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.

