

SEARCH PROFILE:

DEAN OF THE COLLEGE
OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES



Westfield
STATE UNIVERSITY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT WESTFIELD STATE UNIVERSITY	4
THE LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY	5
PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE	7
APPLICATIONS AND NOMINATIONS	8



Westfield State University seeks an innovative and collaborative leader who will bring scholarly and administrative skills to the role of Dean of the College of Professional Studies. The Dean will have the opportunity to lead a talented group of faculty in the College that houses a diverse array of disciplines ranging from Management to Nursing. The Dean will supervise an Administrative Assistant and the academic department chairs; manage a significant budget; and provide leadership to the College of 63 full-time, tenure/tenure-track faculty and a comparable number of part-time faculty.

The Dean will be a champion of both undergraduate and graduate education, leading the faculty in developing a compelling vision for what it means to provide a high-quality public education in applied disciplines ranging from Accounting to Social Work. The Dean will work with the campus community to sustain a learning environment that recognizes the value of a transformative education for Westfield's diverse student body. The successful candidate will lead and support the faculty and others in developing and expanding graduate programs. The Dean will serve as the lead accreditation officer for all the accredited programs in the College and also maintain a quality assurance system for continuous program improvements. The Dean must provide active leadership for the College's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion and promote an environment that advances inclusive excellence and actively opposes discrimination and intolerance.



ABOUT WESTFIELD STATE UNIVERSITY

Founded in 1839 by Horace Mann, Westfield was the first co-educational college in America to offer an education without barrier to race, creed, or economic status. The institution is an education leader committed to providing students of every generation with a learning experience built on its founding principles. This spirit of innovative thinking and social responsibility is forged in a curriculum of liberal arts and professional studies that creates a vital community of engaged learners who become confident, capable individuals prepared for leadership and service to society.

Originally founded as a normal school, the institution transitioned into a state teachers' college in the 1930s and proudly emerged as Westfield State University in 2010. This transformative journey highlights our commitment to fostering broad intellectual development, professional preparation, and impactful community service.

Known as "Whip City," Westfield boasts a history steeped in innovation since the 19th century. Initially known for bricks, whips, and cigars, it emerged as a major hub for the buggy whip industry in the 1800s. Over time, Westfield diversified into industries like bicycles, paper products, textile machinery, and wood products. This transformation turned Westfield from an agricultural town into an industrial city.

Westfield State University sits on an expansive 256-acre campus, nestled just west of Springfield in the picturesque Pioneer Valley of Massachusetts. Enjoy the perfect blend of outdoor activities in the Berkshires

and convenient access to the vibrant city centers of Hartford and Boston. The University has about 4,000 undergraduate students and 800 graduate students across several professional graduate programs.

The College of Professional Studies is home to a variety of professional undergraduate degree programs leading to a Bachelor of Science. The College also offers graduate programs leading to the Master of Arts, Master of Science, Master of Education, Physician Assistant, and Master of Social Work degrees. Our commitment to cultivating leadership and innovation prepares professional student for success in these dynamic fields. Renowned regionally and nationally, our graduates are equipped to navigate today's professional landscape. Through internships, practicums, clinical rotations, and capstone projects, we ensure readiness for the modern workplace.

MISSION

Westfield State University is a public institution offering accessible quality undergraduate and graduate programs in the liberal arts, sciences, and professional studies. Our welcoming community focuses on student engagement and success. We contribute to the economic, social, and cultural growth of the northeast region by developing the knowledge, skills, and character essential for students to become responsible leaders and engaged citizens.



THE LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Reporting to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Dean of the College of Professional Studies will serve as the senior academic officer for the College. The Dean promotes excellence in curricula; teaching and learning; academic advising; scholarship and creative activities; professional development; the stewardship of financial and other resources; and diversity, equity, and inclusion. The Dean develops faculty leadership within the College and enables faculty to develop their scholarly and pedagogical visions to fully realize their strengths. The Dean will lead all accreditation efforts for accredited programs in the College and will ensure that all programs meet national and state professional standards.

The new Dean will need to provide leadership in several significant initiatives that are currently underway at Westfield and within the College. These include the implementation of the University's new general education program ([Westfield Integrative Student Experience: WISE](#)) and the accompanying Academic Plan in each department. WISE is centered on five student learning outcomes chosen by the faculty and implemented in fall 2024. The Dean will work with departments to ensure their majors are relevant to the 21st Century student. Other initiatives include supporting the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan and continuing to foster Westfield's culture of

assessment of both student learning outcomes and academic advising. The Dean will also assist in refining our professional graduate programs to better meet the interests and needs of today's market.

Additional essential functions and associated tasks include:

ADMINISTRATION OF THE COLLEGE

- Works with department chairs and faculty to develop a vision for the programs within the College that are consistent with Westfield's mission, the [University's strategic plan](#), and the Academic Plan of the Division of Academic Affairs.
- Shares the University's deep commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, while working to introduce strategies, systems, and initiatives that work to counter the inherent biases within higher education.
- Works with the Provost and other deans to develop and administer policies that guide the consistent and responsible use of budgets within the College. This includes the strategic deployment of tenure-track faculty lines, ensuring the consistent allocation of operating funds across academic departments, and assisting department chairs in managing their budgets.

THE LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY (CONT.)

- Manages the course schedules in the College to ensure course offerings match student needs.
- Continuously review the organizational structure and operations of the College to enhance efficiency and respond to opportunities.
- Represents the University's academic interests to external stakeholders, including other educational institutions, government agencies, industry partners, and community organizations, including cultivation and fundraising.

ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT SUPPORT

- Works with department chairs, program directors, and faculty to ensure that all academic programs meet the needs and demands of today's 21st Century learners. This may include new curricular offerings that are responsive to student interests and emerging career opportunities. It may also include enhancing Westfield's professional graduate program offerings.
- Works with academic departments to develop effective assessment plans that measure the quality and effectiveness of the curriculum.
- Assists departments in enhancing their connections to alumni and fundraising.
- Supports and enhances the College's capacity to fund and conduct research and creative activity.
- Leads the ongoing accreditation efforts of the academic departments to ensure that all relevant

programs maintain national recognition.

FACULTY SUPPORT AND EVALUATION

- Reviews application portfolios in Renewal, Promotion, and Tenure, as well as six-year professional assessments, and makes recommendations to the Provost.
- Reviews tenure-track position requests from departments and makes recommendations to the Provost.
- Works with department search committees to evaluate candidates for faculty and staff positions to ensure we hire high quality people who share our commitment to our mission.
- Assists departments in mentoring new faculty to maintain the sense of community and commitment to public education that characterizes Westfield.
- Supports faculty scholarship and other creative efforts and assists with grant applications.
- Works with appropriate governance committees and other offices to develop and implement meaningful faculty development opportunities.
- When appropriate, holds the responsibility and shares governance for hearing and responding to faculty or staff issues.
- Evaluates staff and makes recommendations for advancement.





PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

REQUIRED

- Earned terminal degree and demonstrated record of distinguished teaching, research/scholarship, and service consistent with a tenured faculty appointment at the rank of Professor within a department at the university.

PREFERRED

- A demonstrated history of an open, collaborative, and collegial leadership style that demonstrates a commitment to shared governance and the ability to earn the trust of faculty, students, staff, and administrators.
- Ability to work collaboratively with academic departments and faculty to ensure academic programs are innovative, current, and relevant.
- Experience developing, overseeing, and assessing professional graduate programs that serve recent graduates and working adults.
- A record of progressively substantial and successful experience in academic administration including, but not limited to, budgeting, strategic planning, and personnel management.
- Experience successfully leading academic departments through national accreditation and program recognition.
- Evidence of an ability to balance multiple competing demands and priorities and a strong track record of problem solving and proactively addressing challenges.
- Evidence of a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion and experience with programs and pathways to support historically underrepresented groups.
- Ability to work within a unionized environment with shared governance.



APPLICATIONS, NOMINATIONS, AND INQUIRIES

Managing Directors, Cynthia Patterson and Maria Thompson from Academic Search, are assisting Westfield State in this search. Nominators and potential candidates may submit inquiries to WestfieldDeanProfStudies@academicsearch.org. If submitting a nomination, please send the nominee's full name, title, position, and email address. If you are a potential applicant, please attach your CV to the email.

To apply, a candidate should submit the following as three separate pdf documents to WestfieldDeanProfStudies@academicsearch.org:

- A letter of intent addressing how the candidate's experiences align with the leadership opportunity and qualifications articulated in this document.
- A current CV/resume.
- Contact information for at least five professional references, including email addresses and a brief note on the candidate's working relationship with each.

References will not be contacted without the prior knowledge and approval of the candidate and at a later stage in the search.

The deadline for initial consideration is **October 20, 2025**. Review of applications will continue until the search is completed.

The University will ensure that employment and academic decisions, programs and policies will be based solely on the individual eligibility, merit or fitness of applicants, employees and students without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, marital or parental status, or veteran status.

ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search is assisting Westfield 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.

