

# **PRESIDENTIAL PROFILE**

## **(Draft)**

*(Text below with graphics to be added)*

The Board of Trustees of the University of Wyoming announces a search for a president with bold vision, high energy, an ability to work effectively with diverse constituents and the capability to lead the institution in fulfilling the university's public land-grant mission.

Over the past fifteen years, UW has experienced a period of extraordinary growth in the university's academic stature, facilities and infrastructure, and statewide presence. These successes provide the next president with enviable opportunities from which to guide a growing institution to even greater levels of accomplishment.

### **THE UNIVERSITY'S MISSION STATEMENT**

*The University of Wyoming aspires to be one of the nation's finest public land-grant research universities. We serve as a statewide resource for accessible and affordable higher education of the highest quality; rigorous scholarship; technology transfer; economic and community development; and responsible stewardship of our cultural, historical, and natural resources.*

*In the exercise of our primary mission to promote learning, we seek to provide academic and co-curricular opportunities that will:*

- *Expose students to the frontiers of scholarship and creative activity and the complexities of an interdependent world;*
- *Ensure individual interactions among students, faculty, and staff;*
- *Nurture an environment that values and manifests diversity, free expression, academic freedom, personal integrity, and mutual respect; and*
- *Promote opportunities for personal growth, physical health, athletic competition, and leadership development for all members of the University community.*

*As Wyoming's only university, we are committed to outreach and service that extend our human talent and technological capacity to serve the people in our communities, our state, the nation, and the world.*

*The primary vehicles for identifying the specific actions and resource allocations needed to accomplish this complex mission are the University's strategic plans, revised periodically.*

### **A PROFILE OF THE UNIVERSITY**

Established in 1886, the University of Wyoming is a land-grant, Internet II, NCAA Division 1, doctoral/research university. UW is the only four-year public university in the state and combines major-university benefits and small-school advantages.

The University of Wyoming has been accredited by the Higher Learning Commission continuously since 1923 and received continued accreditation in 2009-2010. Individual

programs and schools are also accredited by regional and national professional organizations.

The university is organized into seven colleges and multiple interdisciplinary institutes and schools: College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, College of Arts and Sciences, College of Business, College of Education, College of Engineering and Applied Science, College of Health Sciences, College of Law, Outreach School, School of Energy Resources, and the Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources. The UW Library system has expanded substantially over the past several years and is a member of the Greater Western Library Association.

Since UW serves as Wyoming's land-grant and flagship university, the continuing challenge is to meet the highly diverse academic needs of the state's students and communities while not being everything to everyone. UW offers 200 programs of study across a broad spectrum of disciplines. Students generally experience small class sizes, affording easy access to faculty.

UW also focuses its expertise in selected *areas of academic distinction*. These are fields of academic inquiry and curriculum in which UW has both an existing foundation in faculty strength and a commitment to sustained and increasing prominence. This culture helps counteract the perennial pressure to spread faculty talent over too many fields and too many degree programs.

All of the colleges have these areas of distinction, which include medical education, performing and fine arts, business, biological and atmospheric sciences, computational technology and energy. UW is currently working closely with the governor, state legislature, industry and successful alumni in raising its engineering and science programs to national distinction. The School of Energy Resources has attracted national and international recognition for its cutting-edge instruction and applied research.

UW provides its students access to additional degree programs and coursework through its membership in the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education (WICHE) and the WWAMI medical education program administered by the University of Washington, the nation's premier medical school in primary care and rural medicine.

The State of Wyoming invests strongly in higher education, providing the highest amount of state funding support per student in the nation. Consequently, UW has the lowest undergraduate tuition among the nation's public doctoral universities. The university also benefits from a \$500 million endowed student scholarship program, a robust capital construction budget, and a publicly and privately supported endowed faculty program.

UW has an annual operating budget of \$523 million. State funding accounts for 40% of the revenues, with the remainder generated by a variety of sources including contracts and grants, foundation resources and tuition.

External research funding was over \$82 million in FY14. Annual private giving for the same period exceeded \$50 million. With the support of the Wyoming legislature and private donors and through institutional bonding (UW currently enjoys a Standard and Poor's rating of AA-, with a positive outlook), the university has received \$925 million in capital construction and major maintenance funds over the past decade.

For the fall of 2014, 13,551 students enrolled in baccalaureate, graduate and professional programs. Approximately 10,500 students were enrolled on the Laramie campus. Students come to UW from 47 states, with 61% from Wyoming and 15% from nearby Colorado. Eight hundred and sixty-two are international students.

In the most recent student satisfaction survey, 94% of students indicate that they are pleased with the education they are receiving at UW. The area of greatest concern to students—parking.

The university has a vibrant student life with more than 243 recognized student organizations from which to choose. The student government is engaged and active. There are inclusive living and learning environments and programs which provide civic engagement opportunities for the development of leadership skills and for dialogue, understanding, and appreciation of others. Planning for the replacement of the residency halls has started and is one of UW's top capital construction priorities.

For FY 15, the university employed 638 tenured/tenured-track faculty and 747 full-time instructional faculty. There were 2,814 full-time benefitted staff.

Faculty members are internationally renowned for their research and scholarship and are innovative and creative teachers. Long recognized for its commitment to baccalaureate education, UW seeks greater recognition, both in academia and in the private sector, for its research, scholarly work, creative endeavors, and graduate programs.

The university serves the entire state of Wyoming through an expanding outreach program, which maintains ten regional educational centers. In addition, Extension Centers are scattered throughout Wyoming's 23 counties and on the Wind River Indian Reservation. UW is committed to strong, productive relationships with Wyoming's seven community colleges to provide a seamless and more efficient higher education to more students. And, UW is embarking on a long-term effort to bring its teacher preparation program to national preeminence.

UW is a Division I member of the NCAA and the Mountain West Conference, with 17 intercollegiate varsity sports. The Wyoming Cowboys and Cowgirls are Wyoming's home teams with a strong and passionate fan base throughout the state. There is considerable private and public support to expand the athletic facilities to ensure continued success in the conference.

## **THE UNIVERSITY'S SETTING**

Located in Laramie, a city of 31,000 nestled on the high plains between the Medicine Bow and Laramie mountain ranges two hours north of Denver, UW is an institution of truly distinctive character. The campus exhibits a beautiful structural and landscaped setting, as described in detail in the comprehensive historic preservation plan that nears completion.

Among its assets are a heritage of strong public support, unparalleled statewide presence, and a profound commitment to explore, create, and share knowledge. The next leader of the University of Wyoming will build upon these attributes, some of which deserve elaboration:

- **Statewide role.** State officials recognize UW as Wyoming's largest reservoir of high-level expertise in many areas. It benefits from a streamlined decision-making chain, since it does not report to a statewide system of higher education. It has steadfast supporters in every branch of state government and among the state's citizens. As Wyoming's only university, UW carries a wide-ranging portfolio: It serves as the state's most significant source of teachers, engineers, health-care providers, scientists, business professionals, attorneys, political leaders, writers, and artists.

UW enjoys a solid stance from which to contribute to the diversification of Wyoming's economy. The School of Energy Resources, College of Business and the Office of Research and Economic Development have enabled many public-private partnerships in Wyoming. Gift-matching programs sponsored by the legislature have provided outstanding resources to enable public-private collaborations.

- **State funding.** Wyoming ranks first among states in per-capita public expenditures on higher education. Strong state support and explicit attention to the instructional workforce have enabled UW to achieve a student/faculty ratio of 14:1. By comparison with public research universities in most states, UW has excellent faculty resources for the size of its student body.

Since the national recession in 2008, Wyoming is among a handful of states that has not reduced its financial support for higher education. However, the boom-bust realities of Wyoming's energy-based economy have nevertheless created some funding challenges. While state support through one-time capital construction funding remains robust, salary levels have stagnated and UW experienced budget reductions in FY10 and FY14. A combination of state funding and tuition increases have produced 2-3% raises for each of the past two years.

- **Access.** UW offers high, barrier-free access to a flagship-quality baccalaureate education. Owing to high levels of legislative support, UW's resident undergraduate tuition rate is the lowest among all American public doctoral universities, and its nonresident undergraduate tuition rate compares favorably with the prevailing resident rates in many feeder states. In addition, Wyoming's permanent Hathaway Scholarship Program generates endowment-funded financial aid for all qualifying graduates of Wyoming high schools.

- **Undergraduate education.** Most UW departments place historically strong emphasis on undergraduate teaching, a source of pride. Teaching plays an essential role in faculty reappointment, tenure, and promotion decisions. In 2011, UW's Trustees strengthened the institution's preferred admissions standards, sending a clear message to high school students and their families about the importance of academic preparation for success in college. For students who meet the entrance requirements but fall below the preferred standards, UW offers a menu of academic supports that promote retention and success. In 2014, the university had a 75% retention rate and a 54% six-year graduation rate.
- **Research and graduate education.** As a research and doctorate-granting university, UW expects faculty to conduct rigorously peer-reviewed scholarly work and creative activity and, in some fields, to mentor doctoral students. As with many peer institutions nationwide, UW's investments in research and graduate education constitute an essential component of the state's economic development strategy. At the same time, they impart to its baccalaureate programs the distinctive opportunities associated with flagship public universities and elite private institutions.
- **Distance education and collaboration with community colleges.** A former governor once characterized Wyoming as a community with very long streets. That pretty well sums up the opportunities and challenges in providing distance education. For decades, the university has delivered courses and student support services to learners in communities across Wyoming and worldwide. Unlike many institutions, UW offers distance education through its mainstream departments, with its Outreach School providing administrative and technical support. The outreach programs are able to focus on upper-division and graduate and professional offerings because of UW's close ties to Wyoming's seven public community colleges. UW's increasingly strong relationships with the community colleges underscore their critically important role as pipelines through which Wyoming students can begin to pursue baccalaureate degrees.
- **Strategic planning.** UW enjoys a tradition of strategic planning, which was begun in 1999 with its first Academic Plan. Much of UW's success results from its insistence that resources are allocated according to its planning priorities. One of the top priorities for the next president will be to lead the efforts in updating and developing strategic plans in academics, student recruiting and facilities.

### **THE PRESIDENT'S ROLE**

The president reports directly to the Board of Trustees, whose 12 voting members are appointed by the governor. The president is the chief executive officer of the institution and is responsible to the board for effective leadership and management.

As the leader of the Executive Council, the president collaborates with other campus leaders in developing and executing a broad vision. The president also works closely with the UW Foundation's board of directors; state officials, particularly the governor and members of the legislature; and representatives of other internal and external constituencies in matters of strategic importance to UW and Wyoming.

## **THE NEXT PRESIDENT**

The board is seeking outstanding candidates who possess a bold vision, impeccable integrity, and exemplary leadership and organizational abilities to drive positive change to ensure UW offers quality higher education instruction and research relevant to the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The best candidate will have excellent interpersonal and oral and written communication skills, a high energy level, experience as a successful fundraiser, and an ability to work closely with an involved citizen legislature and governmental officials. S/he must bring knowledge of the many academic and business issues facing higher education in Wyoming and the nation and have the ability to develop successful strategies to address them.

More specifically, the preferred qualifications for the next president include:

- An ability to promote and support excellence in faculty and staff, as well as a strong commitment to educating students from diverse backgrounds so that they have the abilities to lead productive and successful lives;
- Significant knowledge and understanding of finances, budgets and accounting systems and strong managerial skills, particularly in leading planning processes in academics, student recruitment, management and athletics;
- An appreciation of and ability to expand UW's participation in the state's economic development;
- An ability to communicate well and relate effectively to diverse groups, ranging from students, faculty and staff to business leaders, community members and elected officials;
- Experience as a successful fundraiser, particularly in overseeing and promoting the mission and goals of a dynamic UW Foundation in nurturing private giving;
- Significant knowledge of Division I intercollegiate athletics, with a balanced approach to athletic and academic achievements;
- A commitment to academic freedom and an environment of tolerance and respect;
- Candor and a sense of humor

Applications will remain confidential until the selection of the finalists, whose names and application materials will be made public. Applicants are encouraged to submit a letter of application, resume, and the names and contact information for at least five references by **December 1** to:

Shannon Sanchez  
Deputy Secretary to the Board of Trustees  
University of Wyoming  
Dept. 3434, Old Main  
Laramie, WY 82071  
[sanchez@uwyo.edu](mailto:sanchez@uwyo.edu)  
307-766-2662

For more information about UW, please visit [www.uwyo.edu](http://www.uwyo.edu)

*The University of Wyoming embraces the principles of affirmative action and welcomes applications from qualified individuals of any race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, veteran status, or sexual orientation.*