

## A SEARCH FOR THE Vice President for Finance and Administration



### **Southern Connecticut State University,**

a comprehensive public university in New Haven, Connecticut, is launching a national search for its Vice President for Finance and Administration (VPFA). Southern seeks an accomplished and innovative financial leader with a keen desire to serve a diverse and complex institution. The new VPFA will have the opportunity to work with Dr. Dwayne Smith, Southern's dynamic interim president, a strong senior leadership team, an exceptional faculty, a dedicated staff, and impressive students in ensuring the University's position as a vibrant institution offering a 21st century education of excellence.



## PRESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP

On June 1, 2023, Dr. Dwayne Smith assumed the role of interim president of Southern Connecticut State University, a public institution of over 8,800 students in New Haven, Connecticut. Since 2020, Dr. Smith served as campus CEO of Housatonic Community College in Bridgeport, Connecticut, and before coming to Housatonic, he served as interim president of Harris-Stowe State University in St. Louis, Mo., following his successful 13 years as that institution's provost. Overall, he has enjoyed a 40-year career in higher education.

Dr. Smith is a firm believer in the transformative power of education and the importance of higher education in shaping the trajectory of individuals' socioeconomic lives, and he brings nearly 40 years of progressive leadership experience in higher education as an administrator and as faculty. In his short time at Southern, he has fully immersed himself in the community and engaged the entire campus in initiatives for moving the University forward over the next five years. Dr. Smith's leadership ensures that Southern will be a powerful voice in higher education in the region.

## MISSION STATEMENT

Southern Connecticut State University provides exemplary graduate and undergraduate education in the liberal arts and professional disciplines. As an intentionally diverse and comprehensive university, Southern is committed to academic excellence, access, social justice, and service for the public good.

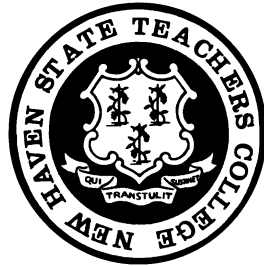


THE LIBRARY AND READING ROOM



## SOUTHERN CONECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY HISTORY

Founded in 1893 as the New Haven State Normal School, Southern was designed to deliver strong teacher preparation – a hallmark of the University throughout its history. In 1937, it became a four-year college – New Haven State Teachers College – with degree-granting powers. Ten years later, it joined with Yale University’s department of education to offer a graduate program leading to a Master of Science degree and assumed full responsibility for the program in 1954. In 1959, six years after the institution had moved to its present location, state legislation expanded the institution’s offerings to include liberal arts curricula leading to bachelor’s degrees in the arts and sciences and subsequently renamed it Southern Connecticut State College. A board of trustees overseeing Connecticut’s four state colleges was established in 1965, and in 1983, Southern Connecticut State College became Southern Connecticut State University, part of the Connecticut State University System. Through the years, Southern has continued its growth as a modern, urban, diversified center of higher learning, expanding both its undergraduate and graduate programs and opening up entirely new fields of study and research. It has also developed a strong sense of its role to serve the community and to meet the educational needs of the region.



## CONNECTICUT STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Connecticut State Colleges & Universities (CSCU) is a system of six colleges and universities: four state universities; CT State Community College (12 locations); and Charter Oak State College, an online degree completion institution. CSCU offers a mix of 2-year and 4-year institutions, online and on ground programs, and 17 locations across Connecticut.

As one of four comprehensive universities within CSCU, Southern maintains strong relations with its System peers, especially its sister institutions: Central Connecticut State University in New Britain, Eastern Connecticut State University in Willimantic, and Western Connecticut State University in Danbury. The president of each university serves as the institution’s chief executive officer and is accountable to the CSCU Board of Regents, through a direct-reporting relationship with the CSCU System President for the management of the university within Board policy.

The 21-member Board of Regents (15 voting members) is the governing authority of the CSCU System. Its responsibilities include setting system-wide tuition and student-fee policies; establishing financial-aid policies; reviewing, licensing, and accrediting academic programs; and, in collaboration with institutional stakeholders, conducting searches for and selecting campus presidents and the CSCU President. The Board also holds broad responsibilities for the development and coordination of statewide higher education policy.



## SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY TODAY

A partially residential university, Southern currently enrolls approximately 8,800 students, 6,781 of whom are full- and part-time undergraduates and 2,039 of whom are full- and part-time graduate students. (Fall '23 census)

A longstanding strength of Southern is its faculty, who are teacher/scholars focused on students and who provide individual academic advising, much out-of-class instruction, and personal attention. Southern students are taught and mentored by 410 full-time faculty members, 87 percent of whom hold a doctorate or other appropriate terminal degree. A strong cadre of 566 part-time faculty members, many of whom are practitioners in their fields, adds breadth and depth of experience to the classroom.

The heart and soul of Southern is its mission, the cornerstones of which are academic excellence, access, social justice, and service for the public good. Southern is a truly student-centered campus that provides for the students an educational experience that is equal to what they would find at more prestigious institutions. The cornerstones of Southern's mission form a unity: providing an excellent education available to all

who can benefit from it at an affordable price is Southern's primary contribution to social justice.

Southern faculty members are actively engaged in scholarship, research, and other creative activity as well as the supervision of undergraduate and graduate research. With strong administrative support, the faculty have dramatically increased the level of sponsored research they seek and receive. At the same time, a sustained commitment to personalized teaching and learning permeates campus culture. Many faculty members oversee internships, graduate and undergraduate theses, special projects, and independent studies. Most also serve as academic advisors.

A strong network of collective bargaining units represents nearly every constituent group within the Southern family. As a result, a clear set of policies, procedures, and agreements, resulting from open negotiations, is widely understood, and shared governance is an important part of Southern's culture.



## THE COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS

Southern consists of the College of Arts and Sciences, the School of Business, the College of Education, the College of Health and Human Services, and the School of Graduate and Professional Studies. Together, they offer more than 225 academic programs. These include bachelor's and master's degrees as well as sixth-year professional diplomas and doctoral degrees in business administration, counselor education and supervision, educational leadership, nursing education, and social work. In addition to traditional in-class pedagogy, Southern offers a broad array of online and hybrid courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

- **The College of Arts and Sciences** includes undergraduate majors and graduate programs in 22 departments. All SCSU undergraduate students spend a minimum of one third of their collegiate careers in carefully chosen arts and sciences courses that serve as the core for their academic life at the University. The College thus plays a central role in ensuring that Southern's mission permeates the student experience.

- **The AACSB-accredited School of Business** offers undergraduate programs in: accounting, economics and finance, management and international business, marketing, business information systems, and public utilities management. Graduate programs include the traditional and accelerated MBA, along with the new STEM MBA and STEM Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) programs. The School of Business opened its new state of the art business building in Fall 2023, the First Net Zero Energy (NZE) building constructed by the state of Connecticut in terms of its carbon footprint. Thanks to Southern's urban location and proximity to other major cities, internship and employment opportunities for business students abound, complementing their in-class experiences.



- **The College of Education** consists of five departments: counseling and school psychology, curriculum and learning, educational leadership and policy studies, information and library science, and special education. Southern plays a leadership role in developing Connecticut's next generation of educators. Through its nationally-accredited programs, the College also prepares students for careers in educational leadership, clinical mental health counseling, school counseling, and school psychology. The Barack Obama University School for K-4 students, developed on the Southern campus and in partnership with the New Haven Board of Education, offers Southern's students in education an on-campus venue for their student teaching and an opportunity to partner in elementary school activities and curriculum.

- **The College of Health and Human Services** includes the following departments: communication disorders; marriage and family therapy; nursing; public health; recreation, tourism and sports management; health and movement sciences; and social work. These disciplines share a mission of compassionate care within a professional framework, and each awards highly-regarded master's and doctoral degrees. The programs emphasize hands-on learning, with numerous opportunities for internships and clinical rotations. The new Health and Human Services state-of-the-art physical facility opened in Fall 2022 to address the demand for well-trained health and human services professionals.

- **The School of Graduate and Professional Studies** serves as administrative support for Southern's graduate students and works closely with the other colleges and schools. With more than 100 degree- and certificate-granting programs, it is one of the most significant public graduate education centers in the Northeast. The University produces the largest number of graduates in health and life sciences, education, and social and public services in the CSCU system. The school is also home for the Office for Workforce and Lifelong Learning (OWLL), Southern's continuing education and professional development programs.



## CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE

Complementing Southern's traditional academic disciplines are several nationally recognized centers. Included among them are the:

- Werth Center for Coastal and Marine Studies
- Center for Community and School Action Research
- Center for Communication Disorders
- Center of Excellence on Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Center of Excellence on Teaching and Learning
- Center for Research on Interface Structures and Phenomena (CRISP)
- Center for Excellence in Math and Science (CEMS)
- Center for Educational and Assistive Technology (CEAT)
- Center for Environmental Literacy and Sustainability Education (CELSE)

The Connecticut State University Center for Nanotechnology is a crucial element of a system-wide collaborative initiative to support a graduate certificate in nanotechnology. The Office of STEM Innovation and Leadership (STEM-IL) is providing synergy to the institution's many STEM-related initiatives and clearly reflects Southern's commitment and leadership in STEM

education, research, and outreach. The Center for Excellence in Mathematics and Sciences has developed programs reflecting strong local involvement. In addition, Southern's distinguished Women's and Gender Studies program conducts a bi-annual conference that draws renowned scholars from around the world.

## SOUTHERN'S FUTURE

Southern Connecticut State University looks to the future with a renewed sense of commitment to elevating educational attainment in our region and the state. We will achieve that with academic programs that confront the most pressing environmental and health issues through innovative research and cultivating a community of entrepreneurial and inventive leaders and educators for Connecticut's workforce.

Elevating students beyond their current socio-economic status is at the heart of Southern's academic mission. Southern's new strategic plan, "Leading the Way: 2023-2028 Priorities" was rolled out with a two-fold purpose: 1) A 5-year planning horizon to focus the institution on strategies and actions that will have immediate and sustainable impacts on recruitment, retention, persistence, and completion, and equity; and 2) Broader



aspirational goals and strategies will have Southern focus on the future as the longer term horizon becomes clearer and as advances are made on the immediate goals of stabilizing and growing enrollment. The University is currently moving aggressively in several directions—a stronger emphasis on social justice; developing academic programs that meet regional needs and establish effective partnerships; increasing fundraising; increasing faculty research and research funding; and improving student support and success.

The foreseeable future at Southern will be a time of exceptional development and change – a time during which Southern increasingly makes good on its promise to provide exemplary, transformative, and accessible education; to strengthen the University-wide culture and infrastructure that nurtures creativity and innovation; to further expand and enhance its facilities; to promote community well-being, economic growth, and social justice by serving and leading in local and global communities; and to steward the University’s human, financial, technological, and physical resources in an ethical manner.

## THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY

Southern is a community truly focused on its students. Faculty, staff, students, alumni, parents, and community members all play a role in the educational enterprise. Multiple voices are welcomed at the table to ensure student success, and many campus members play multiple roles— as mentors, coaches, advisors, teachers, and co-researchers. The sense of camaraderie this approach engenders is palpable and creates a deeper experience of community.

Ninety-six percent of Southern’s students are from the State of Connecticut, both as residence students in nine traditional residence halls and apartments and as commuter students. Special efforts are made to connect the residential and commuter populations in meaningful ways and to make the campus an inviting place to be in the evenings and on weekends.

In addition to supporting its blend of residential and commuter students, Southern deeply values its commitments to access and inclusion. The University welcomes traditional and non-traditional students.

It shares with its sister CSU institutions the determination to provide an upward path for people of talent. The University’s



effective tutoring, counseling, advising, and career development programs are complemented by cutting-edge adaptive technologies. These offerings, coupled with an array of intercultural activities and events, ensure that Southern's students achieve their goals, feel a strong sense of belonging, and remain engaged in the life of the University.

Southern is truly "in" and "of" its geographic region. With the great majority of its students from Connecticut and 90 percent of its graduates remaining in the state following graduation, the University and its more than 98,000 alumni are, without question, shaping the workforce and citizenry of Connecticut. Southern has a defining role to play in articulating those areas of strength for which the state will be known.

Southern students are engaged in activities outside the classroom, participating in approximately 100 student clubs and organizations, myriad community service activities, fraternities and sororities, campus media, musical ensembles, theater and dance groups, athletic teams, and a robust offering of intramural and club sports.

Southern's NCAA Division II athletic program is a member of the Northeast-10 Conference as well as the Eastern College Athletic Conference. It supports eight men's teams and 11 women's teams. The Owls have a long history of athletic excellence. Their ten team championships and 79 individual championships place them among the top ten Division II athletic programs in the nation. There is also a robust community-service emphasis, and student athletes volunteer a great deal of their time to the community.

## A GROWING CAMPUS

Southern continues to develop its modern, 172-acre campus with dramatic new additions and enhancements in the last ten years.

- A 135,000 square-foot addition to Buley Library coupled with a total renovation of the original building has doubled the size of the library's footprint;
- A \$50 million, 103,608-square-foot academic science and laboratory building houses teaching and research laboratories for Southern's programs in the STEM disciplines, which have seen enrollments increase by nearly 27 percent in recent years;
- Construction of a new \$70 million facility for the College of Health and Human Services was completed in 2022;
- The new School of Business opened in fall 2023.
- The University's commitment to sustainability is strong with approximately 5 Megawatts of energy produced



on campus utilizing solar arrays and fuel cells. It is reflected in its expanded staff and in programming offered through the Office of Sustainability. Moreover, in order to meet Connecticut's stringent environmental standards for state funding eligibility, each construction or renovation project totaling \$5 million or more will meet a minimum LEED Silver rating. The campus has thousands of solar panels that generate about 15% of the campus electricity.

- Two fuel cell installations are in design.

## BUDGET AND THE SCSU FOUNDATION

The University's operating budget is roughly \$232 million. Strong and innovative fiscal stewardship has ensured balanced budgets for nearly two decades.

The larger sources of institutional revenue are tuition and fees (52 percent) and state funding (35 percent). The 2024-25 in-state tuition costs are: \$13,438 for full-time undergraduates; \$14,960 for full-time graduate students; and \$24,939 for full-time MBA/MLS/MLIS students. Private giving, while providing a small proportion of the budget, makes significant contributions to student scholarships, funding for new program initiatives, and the growth of the endowment. The current Foundation endowment is approximately \$42 million, with total assets of \$54.8 million.

## ROLE OF VICE PRESIDENT FOR FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Southern seeks a Vice President for Finance & Administration (VPFA) who reports to the President and serves as Chief Financial Officer for the university. The Vice President for Finance and Administration is a member of the President's Cabinet. Financial Administration includes oversight of accounting and finance; facilities operations; university police department; and human resources.

### Challenges and Opportunities for Leadership

- Advise the president and senior leadership on strategies for balancing financial health with delivering on mission and strategic goals of the University.
- Provide expertise and impact with the Presidential Leadership Team.
- Develop strategic plan for additional revenue sources to accompany positive turnaround trend in enrollment and take next steps with addressing state budget funding levels.
- Opportunity to review and restructure the Administration and Finance team and appoint and develop key managers within the division.
- Readiness for budget model review and alignment, optimization of finance processes, and streamlining of internal communications.

### Core Duties and Responsibilities

- The Vice President for Finance and Administration/Chief Financial Officer plays a major leadership role in advancing and enabling the University's mission, through setting strategy and priorities, defining resource allocation, partnering effectively across campus, and building a culture of service, transparency, and compliance.
- The Vice President for Finance and Administration/Chief Financial Officer is the University's chief financial officer, responsible to the President for financial planning and oversight of the University's budget and other financial assets.
- The VPFA/CFO will provide leadership for the budget office, controller, procurement, capital planning and facilities management, human resources, and the university police department.

### Ideal Candidate will possess:

- A personal commitment to social justice in alignment with the mission of the University.
- Ability to effectively work with a culturally, linguistically, and ethnically diverse faculty, staff, and students and an equity perspective on implementation of mission.
- Demonstrated experience in financial planning and budgeting.
- A proven record of success in planning, problem solving, and ability to think proactively, creatively, and strategically.
- Senior-level experience in management, preferably in an institution of higher education or a similar mission-focused organization that is highly complex with multiple stakeholders.
- Demonstrated ability to lead and develop staff, and to sustain good relationships with professional colleagues.
- Experience and knowledge of complex union environments.
- Experience and knowledge of relevant technology systems.
- Experience in managing administrative and facility programs.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- Demonstrated commitment to a collegial work environment.
- MBA or other advanced degree from an accredited institution preferred. CPA or comparable work experience preferred.

### Attributes

- Dynamic leader committed to the social justice mission of the University.
- Politically astute skillful advocate and relationship builder able to make tough decisions, say no when needed, and hold self and others accountable.
- Strategic mindset who sees possibilities and proactively addresses challenges and collaborates for solutions.
- Strong interpersonal leadership abilities with transparency and consistency in communication and accessibility.
- Sees through an equity lens and knows how to operationalize in daily activities.

## THE APPLICATION PROCESS

### Nominations and Applications

All nominations, inquiries, and applications will be received and evaluated in full confidence. For best consideration, application materials should be received by **September 30, 2024**.

- A letter of interest stating how the candidate's experiences and qualifications connect with the desired leadership attributes and themes stated in the profile.
- Curriculum vitae/resume.
- Five professional references with email addresses and telephone numbers. References will not be contacted without prior authorization from the candidate.

Application materials should be submitted through the AGB Search portal system: [SCSU – VPFA Application Portal](#)

Nominations and inquiries should be sent to SCSU-VPFA@agbsearch.com.

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Southern Connecticut State University is an Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Employer. The University seeks to enhance the diversity of its faculty and staff. People of color, women, veterans, and persons with disabilities are strongly encouraged to apply.