University of Missouri

Executive Director of Admissions

Leadership Profile

Fall/Winter 2026



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Executive Summary

The University of Missouri (Mizzou) seeks a strategic, innovative, and student-centered leader to serve as its next Executive Director of Admissions. Reporting to the Vice Provost for Enrollment Management, the Executive Director will provide vision and leadership for the University's undergraduate recruitment, admissions, and new student onboarding enterprise. This leader will direct the Office of Undergraduate Admissions and New Student Programs and play a central role in advancing Mizzou's goals of attracting, enrolling, and welcoming an academically talented student body from Missouri and beyond.

The Executive Director will join Mizzou at an important moment for public higher education, when demographic change, intensifying competition, and evolving student expectations require enrollment leaders to combine sophisticated market analysis with a compelling, personalized recruitment experience. The successful candidate will develop a comprehensive and forward-looking recruitment strategy, evaluate the effectiveness of marketing and outreach efforts, use technology to improve admissions processes and services, and translate data into timely decisions on markets, resources, scholarship strategy, and enrollment projections.

This position is both strategic and highly operational. The Executive Director will lead a substantial, multifaceted organization that includes professional staff, support staff, and student employees; oversee an annual budget of approximately $10 million; and coordinate undergraduate recruitment and onboarding activities across the University. Close collaboration with the Executive Director for Scholarships and Financial Aid, the Director of Enrollment Management, Marketing and Communications, academic deans and department chairs, and other campus partners will be essential to align recruitment, admissions, scholarships, marketing, and student transition strategies.

Mizzou offers a distinctive platform for this work. As Missouri's flagship, land-grant research university and the state's only public member of the Association of American Universities, Mizzou combines the scale and breadth of a major research institution with a strong commitment to student success and public service. The next Executive Director will have the opportunity to shape how prospective students and families experience the University, strengthen Mizzou's competitive position, and directly influence the institution's academic, reputational, and financial future.

To submit a nomination or express personal interest in this position, please see Procedure for Candidacy at the end of this document.

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Role of the Executive Director of Admissions

The Executive Director of Admissions will shape how future Tigers discover, choose, and begin their Mizzou experience. Reporting to the Vice Provost for Enrollment Management, this senior leader will set the vision for undergraduate recruitment, admissions, and new student onboarding—aligning strategy and execution with the University's mission, academic priorities, and financial goals. Key responsibilities include:

- **Advance an integrated admissions strategy.** Unite market priorities, recruitment, promotion, admissions, campus engagement, and onboarding to create a coordinated approach across the University.
- **Turn insight into action.** Use enrollment trends, projections, market intelligence, and return-on-investment analysis to refine territories, staffing, outreach, admission practices, and resource allocation while elevating decisions with significant institutional implications.
- **Create a standout student experience.** Strengthen admissions operations and ensure prospective and admitted students receive responsive, high-quality service at every stage of the enrollment journey.
- **Lead and develop a high-performing team.** Guide approximately 49 full-time-equivalent employees and a significant student workforce, setting clear expectations, investing in professional growth, and advancing a culture of service, collaboration, accountability, and continuous improvement.
- **Champion Mizzou on campus and beyond.** Build productive relationships with academic leaders, students and families, school and community college partners, counselors, community stakeholders and vendors, representing the University with judgment, discretion and persuasive communication.

Overview of Undergraduate Admissions and New Student Programs

Leading Undergraduate Admissions and New Student Programs, the Executive Director will shape the entire journey from first interest to a confident start at Mizzou. The role brings together recruitment strategy, admissions operations, market intelligence, technology-enabled services, campus engagement, and new student transition to create a more connected and compelling experience for students and families.

Mizzou operates a centralized undergraduate admissions process through the Office of Undergraduate Admissions and New Student Programs. Students may apply using either the Common App or Mizzou Application, with applications opening annually on August 1. The University utilizes a hybrid admissions model, releasing its first admission decisions on October 1 and continuing to make decisions on a rolling basis thereafter.

Admissions demand has grown significantly in recent years, with Mizzou receiving nearly 35,000 undergraduate applications annually. For Fall 2026, Mizzou enrolled 6,039 first-time college students and 1,204 transfer students, resulting in a new undergraduate class of 7,243 students. Total university enrollment is projected to be 31,787 students.

The University currently operates under a test-optional plan for freshman applicants. Students may choose to submit ACT or SAT scores for admission and scholarship consideration or opt for a holistic review based on academic performance, extracurricular involvement, and application materials.

The Executive Director's portfolio includes:

- **Recruitment and market strategy:** first-year, transfer, and international recruitment; market development; territory planning; travel; and school engagement.
- **Admissions and enrollment operations:** application review, decision processes, forecasting, reporting, and continuous improvement across the enrollment funnel.

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- **Student engagement and transition:** campus visits, visitor relations, yield programs, onboarding and coordinated support for new students and families in the lead-up to starting classes.
- **Marketing, technology and service:** recruitment campaign assessment, CRM optimization, process innovation and responsive, technology-enabled service.
- **People and organizational leadership:** talent development, team effectiveness and a culture of collaboration, accountability and student-centered service.
- **Stewardship and partnerships:** strategic resource allocation, budget oversight, vendor management and productive collaboration across the University.



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Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

Mizzou enters its next chapter of enrollment leadership from a position of strength, with measured growth goals and a clear opportunity to modernize and expand how the University competes for students. Demographic shifts, changing student expectations, and intensifying competition across Missouri, the Midwest, and nationally call for fresh thinking, disciplined execution, and closer alignment among admissions, financial aid, marketing, academic colleges, and student success. The next Executive Director will be a trusted thought partner and change leader who can assess long-standing practices, build on what works, and help Mizzou advance from steady performance to greater distinction and impact.

For a strategic admissions leader energized by the opportunity to shape institutional direction, build relationships, lead through change, and influence enrollment outcomes at scale, this role offers an exceptional opportunity to make a lasting impact at one of the nation's leading public universities.

The successful candidate will be expected to address the following priorities:

Understand Mizzou's Enrollment Landscape

Success will begin with developing a nuanced understanding of Missouri's enrollment landscape, which is both complex and highly competitive as Mizzou recruits aggressively for students within Missouri and across neighboring states. Students from St. Louis, Kansas City, and rural Missouri represent distinct audiences with different motivations, expectations, and perceptions of the institution. The successful candidate will understand these differences, build strong relationships throughout the state, and help the admissions team deploy recruitment strategies that resonate with each market while strengthening Mizzou's position as the state's flagship and leading public university.

The next Executive Director will also have the opportunity to expand Mizzou's reach in strategic out-of-state markets. The University is increasing its focus on select Southern and Western regions. It is seeking a leader who can thoughtfully evaluate emerging opportunities, refine market expansion strategies, and identify the populations and geographies with the greatest long-term potential.

Develop and Implement an Integrated Recruitment Strategy

Mizzou seeks a leader who can integrate market segmentation, territory management, communications, outreach, campus engagement, admissions practices, and yield strategy into a unified framework. The next Executive Director will establish clear priorities, align resources with institutional objectives, and build a national recruitment model that advances measured growth, strengthens Mizzou’s competitive position, and enhances the student experience.

This work comes at a time when Mizzou is becoming increasingly intentional about shaping demand and strengthening its competitive position. The University has introduced new admission and scholarship timelines, is refining elements of its enrollment funnel, and is working to build greater anticipation and engagement among prospective students. The next Executive Director will inherit the opportunity to evaluate these efforts, identify new approaches, and help ensure that recruitment activities support institutional goals for enrollment, academic quality, and student success.

Advance a Rigorous Culture of Data-Informed Decision-Making

The next Executive Director will be expected to strengthen the use of data throughout recruitment strategy and execution. This leader will leverage historical trends, predictive analytics, funnel performance, market intelligence, and return-on-investment measures to guide decision-making and resource allocation.

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It is important to systematically evaluate the effectiveness of recruitment events, travel strategies, communication plans, and scholarship investments. The successful candidate will be able to synthesize information from admissions, financial aid, marketing, and institutional research, identify emerging patterns, clearly communicate implications, and make informed decisions in a dynamic environment.

Strengthen Recruitment Marketing and the Prospective Student Experience

Mizzou is actively examining how it presents itself to prospective students and families and is seeking a leader to elevate the University's visibility and value proposition. In partnership with Enrollment Management Marketing and Communications, the Executive Director will assess the effectiveness of recruitment campaigns, ensure messaging and outreach are coordinated and responsive, and help articulate what distinguishes Mizzou in an increasingly crowded marketplace.

This work is particularly important as the University seeks to strengthen brand awareness both within and beyond Missouri. The successful candidate will help create a seamless and compelling student experience from first inquiry through enrollment, ensuring that communications, campus visits, events, and enrollment processes reinforce one another and reflect the strength of the Mizzou experience.

Modernize Technology, Operations and Service Delivery

The Executive Director will champion the effective use of technology and process improvement to support recruitment goals and enhance service to students and families. Mizzou has made significant investments in enrollment technology and utilizes a robust suite of platforms and tools to support recruitment, communication, and enrollment operations.

The successful candidate will leverage CRM capabilities, workflow automation, analytics, and emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, to improve responsiveness, reduce operational friction, and support sound decision-making. Equally important, this leader will maintain a continuous-improvement mindset, evaluating processes and systems to ensure that technology enhances, rather than replaces, meaningful and personalized engagement with students.

Sustain a Coordinated and High-Performing Organization

The next Executive Director will inherit a talented, dedicated, and student-centered admissions team that is deeply committed to Mizzou and its mission. Team members consistently described a strong culture of collaboration and a shared commitment to helping students achieve their educational aspirations. Many staff members are Mizzou alumni who possess a deep appreciation for the institution's traditions, culture, and impact.

At the same time, the division is at a moment of change. The admissions enterprise has provided steady, reliable service, and Mizzou now seeks a leader who can build on that foundation to achieve a higher level of performance and impact. The successful candidate will thoughtfully examine long-standing business practices through the lenses of competition, demographic change, effectiveness, and service; challenge assumptions where appropriate; and translate new ideas into sustainable improvements. This leader will bring stability and consistency while fostering innovation and growth, clarifying purpose, strengthening communication, establishing shared accountability, and helping the organization navigate change with transparency and respect.

Integrate Admissions and New Student Onboarding

With responsibility for New Student Programs, the Executive Director will have a unique opportunity to strengthen the connection between recruitment, admission, enrollment, and transition. Mizzou seeks a leader who views enrollment through the lens of the entire student lifecycle rather than focusing solely on application and matriculation outcomes.

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The successful candidate will work collaboratively across campus to ensure a seamless progression from prospective students to enrolled Tigers, helping students and families feel welcome, informed, and supported throughout the transition process. This holistic approach is expected to strengthen both enrollment outcomes and student success.

Cultivate Productive Partnerships Across the University

Enrollment success at Mizzou depends upon strong relationships and coordinated action across the institution. The next Executive Director will take a fresh look at how Undergraduate Admissions partners with academic colleges and units across campus, identifying opportunities to clarify roles, align priorities, and create more coordinated recruitment and yield strategies. Building trust and credibility with deans, department chairs, faculty, financial aid, student affairs, marketing and communications, institutional research, and other campus partners will be essential.

Represent Mizzou with Credibility and Enthusiasm

As a visible ambassador for the University, the Executive Director will represent Mizzou to prospective students, families, school counselors, community partners, alumni, and external stakeholders. The successful candidate must be an engaging communicator who can authentically convey the University's strengths, opportunities, and aspirations. Equally important, the next leader will appreciate what makes Mizzou distinctive. From its strong sense of community and enduring traditions to its commitment to student success and growing national profile, Mizzou inspires deep loyalty among students, alumni, and employees alike.



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Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

Mizzou seeks an accomplished admissions leader who combines strategic vision, analytical capability, operational discipline, and a deep commitment to students. The successful candidate will demonstrate many of the following qualifications and qualities:

- **Comprehensive Admissions and Enrollment Expertise:** At least seven years of progressively responsible experience in undergraduate admissions and/or enrollment management, with demonstrated success developing and executing recruitment, admission, and yield strategies.
- **Strategic and Analytical Leadership:** A record of using data, market segmentation, enrollment projections, and performance measures to establish priorities, evaluate effectiveness, and achieve measurable results. The ability to synthesize multiple sources of information and translate analysis into clear strategic action.
- **Recruitment and Market Development:** Experience identifying and developing new geographic and student markets, deploying recruitment resources, evaluating territory performance, and adapting strategies in response to demographic, economic, and competitive trends.
- **Technology and Process Innovation:** Demonstrated success using CRM systems, admissions technologies, automation, analytics, and digital tools to strengthen recruitment, improve operations, and elevate service. A willingness to challenge legacy processes and lead thoughtful change.
- **Organizational and Talent Leadership:** Proven ability to lead and inspire teams within a complex organization, develop professional and support staff, foster collaboration across functions, and advance an inclusive, service-oriented culture that supports innovation, accountability, and continuous growth.
- **New Student Transition and Student-Centered Service:** An understanding of the relationship between recruitment, admission, onboarding, and student success, with a commitment to designing clear, equitable, and welcoming experiences for students and families.
- **Collaborative Institutional Leadership:** Demonstrated ability to build productive partnerships with enrollment colleagues, academic deans and department chairs, faculty, student affairs leaders, communications professionals, and other stakeholders.
- **Financial and Resource Acumen:** Experience managing substantial budgets, evaluating return on investment, allocating resources, and exercising responsible stewardship. Sound judgment regarding contracts, vendors, scholarship strategy, and other decisions with meaningful financial implications.
- **Communication and Relationship Building:** Exceptional written, verbal, and presentation skills. The ability to explain complex enrollment issues, build consensus, persuade thoughtfully, and represent the University effectively with internal and external audiences.
- **Judgment:** A high degree of independent judgment, emotional intelligence, and self-awareness.
- **Change Leadership and Adaptability:** The ability to navigate complex situations, build trust across diverse constituencies, and lead through ambiguity and change with empathy, transparency, and consistency. The ability to balance innovation with stability while helping individuals and teams adapt to evolving priorities and expectations.
- **Credentials:** A master's degree is desired. A bachelor's degree with significant professional experience is required.

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About the University of Missouri

Overview

Founded in 1839, the University of Missouri is the state's flagship public university and the first public university established west of the Mississippi River. Widely known as Mizzou, the University is a land-grant institution, a Carnegie Research 1 university, and Missouri's only state-supported member of the Association of American Universities. Its integrated missions of teaching, research, public service, and economic development extend across Missouri and beyond.

Mizzou enrolls nearly 32,000 students from all 50 states and more than 100 countries. The University offers more than 300 degree programs through 13 schools and colleges and maintains a 17-to-1 student-to-faculty ratio. Mizzou is one of only six public universities in the United States with schools or colleges of engineering, medicine, veterinary medicine, law, and agriculture on a single campus.

The University combines the reach of a major research institution with the energy and community of a residential campus. Students learn alongside nationally and internationally recognized faculty, participate in research and creative activity, and benefit from extensive leadership, service, study abroad, and career development opportunities. Mizzou reports a 90% retention rate and strong post-graduation outcomes, with 95% of graduates employed, continuing their education, or otherwise successful within six months of graduation.

Mission

Mizzou's distinct land-grant mission is to provide all Missourians with the benefits of a world-class research university. Teaching, research, service, and economic development work together to advance knowledge, improve quality of life, and serve the state, nation, and world.

Values

- **Respect:** Acting ethically, welcoming difference and exchanging ideas openly.
- **Responsibility:** Being accountable to oneself, others, and the public and serving as thoughtful stewards of resources.
- **Discovery:** Pursuing knowledge, innovation, and creative inquiry that address meaningful questions and improve lives.
- **Excellence:** Reaching for ambitious goals through diligent individual and collective effort.

Academics

Mizzou provides students with extensive academic opportunities at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional levels across disciplines, including agriculture, business, education, engineering, health professions, journalism, law, medicine, nursing, public affairs, science, and veterinary medicine. Known for its hands-on approach to learning, the University emphasizes experiential education, research, leadership development, and career preparation, enabling students to apply knowledge in real-world settings while developing the skills needed to thrive in an increasingly complex and dynamic workforce.

The Honors College enhances the academic experience for highly motivated students by providing access to enriched coursework, research opportunities, faculty mentorship, and interdisciplinary learning experiences that combine the close-knit environment of an honors community with the resources of a nationally recognized research university. In parallel, Mizzou continues to expand innovative educational pathways, including online and

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hybrid learning opportunities, professional and workforce-focused certificates and other flexible credentialing options designed to meet the evolving needs of learners throughout their educational and professional careers.

Schools & Colleges

- College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources (CAFNR)
- College of Arts and Science
- Trulaske College of Business
- College of Education and Human Development
- College of Engineering
- Graduate School
- College of Health Sciences
- Honors College
- Missouri School of Journalism
- School of Law
- School of Medicine
- Sinclair School of Nursing
- College of Veterinary Medicine

Student Life

Students can participate in a wide range of organizations, leadership experiences, service opportunities, research, cultural programs, and recreational activities. The Missouri Tigers compete in 18 NCAA Division I sports as a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC), contributing to a strong sense of tradition and community.

The University's location in Columbia places students in a nationally recognized college town with a lively downtown, extensive parks and trails, arts and cultural offerings, and accessible connections to Kansas City and St. Louis.



Enrollment Leadership

Steve Robinson, Vice Provost for Enrollment Management

Steve Robinson serves as Vice Provost for Enrollment Management at the University of Missouri. With over 25 years of experience in student recruitment and enrollment strategy, Robinson has held leadership roles at institutions including the University of Alabama, the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, West Virginia University, the University of Oregon, and the University of Utah.

Robinson is committed to fostering excellence in enrollment, retention, and student success. His work has been recognized for creating opportunities for prospective students and strengthening university communities.

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Columbia, Missouri



Columbia, Missouri, is a vibrant and growing community of approximately 130,000 residents located in the heart of the state, midway between Kansas City and St. Louis. Home to the University of Missouri, Columbia blends the energy and cultural amenities of a major university town with the accessibility, affordability, and quality of life associated with a mid-sized community. The city boasts a strong educational environment, a diverse and growing economy, excellent health care resources, and a highly educated population.

Columbia offers a rich array of cultural, recreational, and entertainment opportunities. Residents enjoy a vibrant downtown district, locally owned restaurants and shops, performing arts venues, museums, and a year-round calendar of community events and festivals. Outdoor enthusiasts benefit from an extensive park system, miles of multi-use trails, and nearby destinations such as Rock Bridge Memorial State Park and the MKT Nature and Fitness Trail, which connect to the larger Katy Trail State Park network.

Frequently recognized for its livability, economic vitality, and quality of life, Columbia offers residents the advantages of a dynamic college town while maintaining a welcoming and collaborative community atmosphere. Its central location provides convenient access to Missouri's major metropolitan areas while preserving the character and connectivity that make Columbia an attractive place to live, work, and learn.

Learn more at visitcolumbiamo.com.

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Procedure for Candidacy

WittKieffer is assisting the University of Missouri in this search. All applications, nominations, and inquiries are invited. Applications should include, as separate documents, a CV or resume and a letter of interest addressing the themes in this profile.

For fullest consideration, candidate materials should be received by the priority deadline of **December 7, 2026.**

Application materials should be submitted using WittKieffer's **candidate portal**.

Nominations and inquiries can be directed to:

Amy Crutchfield and Roxana Woudstra

Mizzou-Director@wittkieffer.com

Benefit Eligibility – *This position is eligible for University benefits. As part of your total compensation, the University offers a comprehensive benefits package, including medical, dental, and vision plans, retirement, and educational fee discounts for all four UM System campuses. For additional information on University benefits, please visit the Faculty & Staff Benefits website at https://www.umsystem.edu/departments-staff/human-resources/benefits-retirement*

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To request ADA accommodations, please call the Director of Accessibility and ADA at 573-884-7278.

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