



Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs

Leadership Profile

October 2025



WittKieffer

Executive Summary

New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) seeks an experienced academic leader in its search for a student-centered senior vice provost for academic affairs (SVPAA). This pivotal role offers the opportunity to drive institutional transformation by championing student success and accelerating NJIT's strategic goals.

NJIT is one of only 35 polytechnic universities in the United States and stands as New Jersey's leading producer of technological talent and innovation. As a nexus of innovation, NJIT serves as both a physical and intellectual hub for transformative ideas, groundbreaking research, and visionary people. It is the only university in the nation designated by the Carnegie Classification as an R1 (top-tier) research university, a tech-focused institution, and an opportunity college—providing students with high career earnings and exceptional upward economic mobility. NJIT ranks among the top 80 national universities according to U.S. News & World Report, and #40 among public universities. With \$171 million in annual research expenditures and a \$2.8 billion economic impact on New Jersey, NJIT plays a vital role in driving the state's economy. The university is also distinguished by its highly diverse student body and is designated a Minority-Serving Institution (MSI) by the U.S. Department of Education, including as an Asian American Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISI) and a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI).

With over 12,300 students and 3624 tenured or tenure-track faculty across six schools and colleges, NJIT has seen significant growth in both enrollment and key performance indicators, thanks to new programs, innovations in research, and campus development. The University's multidisciplinary, computing-intensive curriculum prepares students to lead in the technology-dependent economy of the 21st century by providing technological proficiency, business acumen, and leadership skills.

Reporting to Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs John A. Pelesko, the SVPAA is a pivotal member of NJIT's senior leadership team and a key advocate for student success. The SVPAA provides forward-thinking academic leadership to ensure that programs, support services, and university policies are intentionally designed to enhance the student experience and align with NJIT's new strategic plan. The SVPAA oversees a broad portfolio including the Office of Graduate Studies, the Office of Undergraduate Studies, University Libraries, the Office of Global Initiatives, and the Center for Educational Innovation and Excellence, and works closely with senior leadership within the Office of the Provost, college deans, the Faculty Senate, and the Division of Student Affairs to advance student achievement and satisfaction.

As NJIT's lead architect of student-centered academic practice, the next SVPAA will help shape and execute an integrated academic vision aligned with institutional goals that elevate the student experience. In close partnership with the Provost, the SVPAA will guide multi-year planning across key academic units, ensuring measurable improvements in student success and satisfaction. The SVPAA will champion cross-divisional coordination to streamline student services, lead accreditation and assessment efforts that drive continuous improvement, and unify undergraduate and graduate strategies to support learners throughout their academic journey.

This role demands a leader who can break down barriers, build shared purpose, and accelerate NJIT's transition to a more integrated, student-centered academic ecosystem. The SVPAA will join the Provost and Senior Vice President for Student Affairs in leading a cross-campus "student success nexus," integrating scattered efforts into a cohesive enterprise that identifies and addresses systemic challenges. As a key member of NJIT's senior leadership team, including as a member of the President's Council, the SVPAA will contribute to university-wide decision-making and help shape the future of one of the nation's leading polytechnic institutions.

The successful candidate will hold an earned doctorate or terminal degree, possess significant experience in academic administration, and demonstrate a record of improving student success. This work demands a leader who understands STEM education and modern approaches to student success, both inside and outside the classroom, and brings experience with evidence-based practices, data-informed decision-making, and a record of collaboration. They will be a forward-thinking problem solver and effective communicator who builds trust and shared purpose.

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



Role of the Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs

Reporting to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs (SVPAA) is a pivotal member of NJIT's senior leadership team and a key advocate for student success. The SVPAA provides forward-thinking academic leadership to ensure programs, support services, and university policies are intentionally designed to enhance the student experience and align with NJIT's strategic goals. The SVPAA oversees a broad portfolio including the Office of Graduate Studies, the Office of Undergraduate Studies, University Libraries, the Office of Global Initiatives, and the Center for Educational Innovation and Excellence and works closely with senior leadership within the Office of the Provost, college deans, the Faculty Senate, and the Division of Student Affairs to advance student achievement and satisfaction.



As NJIT's chief integrator of student-centered academic practice, the SVPAA leads the development, implementation, assessment, and continuous improvement of academic programs and policies; leverages data and technology to streamline academic decision-making; and forges internal and external partnerships that expand opportunity for learners locally and globally. The SVPAA represents NJIT on the New Jersey Presidents' Council (NJPC) Academic Issues Committee, contributing to statewide review of program proposals, licensure matters, and university status.

The SVPAA will be supported in their work by the following direct reports:

- Vice Provost, Graduate Studies and Dean of Graduate Faculty
- Vice Provost, Undergraduate Studies
- University Librarian
- Director, Center for Educational Innovation and Excellence
- Executive Director, Office of Global Initiatives

Key areas of responsibility include, but are not limited to:

- Strategic Academic Planning: Lead portfolio-level planning, implementation, and assessment with a clear focus on student achievement and satisfaction.
- Student-Centered Program Development: Partner with deans and department chairs to design and enhance sustainable academic programs aligned with student demand and success.
- Academic Policy Development: Create, implement, and steward policies and procedures that support the academic enterprise and the student experience.

- Accreditation and Program Evaluation: Coordinate with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Data Analytics on institutional accreditation; direct evaluation and continuous improvement of academic programs to strengthen learning.
- Data-Driven Decision Making: Use analytics to inform policy and practice; lead efforts to improve data and technology use in academic operations.
- Educational Partnerships: Oversee the development, maintenance, and strategic expansion of local, national, and international higher-education partnerships that enrich global and experiential opportunities for students.
- Cross-Departmental Collaboration: Foster alignment with Enrollment Management, Student Affairs, University Operations, Finance, and Athletics to holistically support student needs.

Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

Champion Student Success as a Cross-Campus Integrator

The SVPAA will serve as NJIT's chief driver and champion of student success, leading efforts to unify and elevate the student experience across academic and co-curricular domains. With a deep understanding of STEM education and modern approaches to student success—both in the classroom and through high-impact practices—the SVPAA will bring experience with evidence-based practices and a commitment to continuous improvement. A critical early priority will be to address longstanding roadblocks including the coordination of student success efforts that are currently scattered across units and often operating in silos. The SVPAA will be tasked with creating a cohesive, data-informed strategy of where NJIT needs to go and mobilizing the institution around these priorities.



This work aligns directly with NJIT's [strategic plan](#), launched in April 2024, which identifies student success as a foundational pillar. The campus has brought together a cross-campus group to study disparate efforts in student success, identify systemic challenges, and foster collaboration across academic and administrative units. The incoming SVPAA will be an active leader and participant in this group.

Foster Cross-Division Collaboration to Support Student Needs

At the center of this leader's role will be the need to be a collaborator and convener. The SVPAA will partner closely with Enrollment Management, Student Affairs, University Operations, Finance, and Athletics to remove administrative barriers and synchronize services that affect the student experience—from course scheduling and academic policies to advising, financial planning, and co-curricular engagement. The SVPAA's work will ensure that academic and student-life efforts reinforce one another in support of student achievement and satisfaction.

Lead Accreditation, Assessment, and Continuous Improvement

In partnership with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Data Analytics, the SVPAA will guide institutional accreditation efforts and coordinate assessment across academic programs. The emphasis is on closing the loop: translating assessment findings into concrete adjustments in curricula, pedagogy, and academic support; documenting impact on learning outcomes; and aligning program changes with NJIT's policy framework. The SVPAA will also ensure that academic review processes are timely, evidence-driven, and communicated with clarity to faculty governance. NJIT is still evolving in its use of data to inform academic decisions, and the SVPAA will play a key role in accelerating this transformation.

Expand Global Engagement and Steward International Partnerships

NJIT's global footprint is growing, and the SVPAA will play a central role in expanding international partnerships and overseeing the Office of Global Initiatives. While the President's Office has led much of this work to date, the SVPAA will assume responsibility for managing memorandums of understanding, cultivating new collaborations, and ensuring that global engagement efforts align with academic priorities. The SVPAA must be proactive, culturally sensitive, and strategic in advising institutional leadership on international opportunities and challenges.

Modernize Academic Policy and Governance

NJIT's academic policy landscape includes outdated or undocumented practices that require thoughtful review and reform. The SVPAA will lead efforts to clean up, clarify, and codify academic policies to ensure consistency, transparency, and alignment with institutional goals. This includes identifying gaps where practice exists without policy and working with faculty governance to develop frameworks that support academic integrity, innovation, and student success.

Contribute to a Collaborative and Inclusive Leadership Team

The SVPAA will be a key member of NJIT's senior leadership team, where collaboration and shared governance are core values. Leaders are expected to weigh in on major institutional decisions, contribute their perspectives across domains, and help shape the university's direction. The SVPAA must be a trusted, contributing voice who brings strategic insight, operational savvy, and a commitment to inclusive excellence.



Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

The ideal SVPAAs will be a student-centered, innovative academic leader with the judgment, communication skills, and collaborative temperament to elevate academic quality and the student experience across a complex STEM-intensive research university.

Education and experience:

- Earned doctorate or equivalent terminal degree is required.
- Significant experience in academic administration with a demonstrated record of improving student success in varied settings.
- Ideally, the academic credentials and experience that qualify them for appointment as a full professor within one of the departments at NJIT.

Demonstrated knowledge and experience:

- Success in strategic academic planning, policy development, and implementation tied to measurable outcomes.
- Proven ability to design and enhance academic programs based on student demand, support, and success.
- Facility with data analytics and evidence-informed decision-making in an academic context.
- Experience coordinating accreditation, assessment, and program review in partnership with institutional effectiveness units.
- Strength in building educational partnerships (local, national, and international) that expand student opportunity.
- Record of cross-departmental collaboration with Enrollment Management, Student Affairs, and administrative divisions to advance student achievement.

Leadership attributes and interpersonal skills:

- Forward-thinking, innovative problem solver who is also detail-oriented and policy-savvy.
- Excellent written and verbal communication, with the ability to engage faculty, staff, and students and to work effectively with deans and governance bodies.
- Relationship-builder who fosters shared purpose, transparency, and trust across the academic enterprise.
- Commitment to continuous improvement and the assessment-driven enhancement of teaching, learning, and student support.
- Professional presence to represent NJIT credibly on system- and state-level bodies (e.g., NJPC Academic Issues Committee).

About New Jersey Institute of Technology



Overview

Since its founding in 1881, the New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) has been committed to academic excellence and is now one of the nation's leading polytechnic universities. With approximately more than 12,300 students across six schools and colleges, NJIT has seen significant growth in both enrollment and strategic metrics, thanks to new programs, innovations in research, and campus development. The University's multidisciplinary, computing-intensive curriculum prepares students to lead in the technology-dependent economy of the 21st century by providing technological proficiency, business acumen, and leadership skills.

NJIT is ranked among the top universities in the United States. It is an "R1" research university, the highest designation for research activity, conducting approximately \$171 million in research annually and generating a \$2.8 billion economic impact. U.S. News & World Report ranks NJIT among the Top 50 Public National Universities (#80 overall) and is recognized for its strong return on investment. With over 125 degree programs, including 20 Ph.D. offerings, and more than 140 research institutes, NJIT offers students an immersive education that combines hands-on experience, research, and industry-relevant knowledge.

The University has a student-to-faculty ratio of 17:1 and has invested over \$700 million in infrastructure in the past decade to provide sophisticated classrooms, labs, technology, and student support facilities. NJIT is recognized as a Minority-Serving Institution (MSI) by the U.S. Department of Education, including as an Asian American Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISI) and a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI). This commitment to diversity helps prepare students to thrive in and lead the modern workforce.

In addition to its academic offerings, NJIT is home to the New Jersey Innovation Institute (NJII), a wholly-owned subsidiary, 501(c)(3) organization focused on accelerating technology and fostering innovation with a positive economic impact. NJII has generated over \$330 million in revenue through its healthcare, defense, and entrepreneurship work.

NJIT's new Center for Translational Research and Center for Student Entrepreneurship support new revenue streams through the commercialization and licensing of NJIT innovations to established companies and university spin-offs, and through new university-industry R&D collaborations.

Looking ahead, NJIT is adapting its strategic plans to address challenges such as advancements in artificial intelligence, changing student demographics, and the evolving impact of the global pandemic. NJIT's 2030 initiative aims to transform the university experience through unparalleled education, innovation, and applied research, cultivating a diverse community of leaders and professionals prepared for the future, and creating an "Innovation Nexus".

Academics

NJIT is home to six schools and colleges. Each has a distinct identity while contributing to NJIT's overall mission. As the University has grown and evolved, care has been given to ensure that each college augments the others. An interdisciplinary approach to learning allows students to study across the full breadth of NJIT. The University works actively to constantly develop new educational opportunities designed to meet the changing needs of the marketplace. Learning communities, undergraduate and graduate research, hands-on experiences, internships, and co-op programs complement the classroom and laboratory experience. In this same spirit, NJIT looks to integrate student life with academics and believes that engagement with athletics, student clubs, and other activities are a part of a successful holistic curriculum.

NJIT is committed to the challenge of preparing students to compete and excel in the quickly changing landscape of the high-tech industry. The immersive, multi-dimensional educational experience students receive in preparing them to be well-rounded citizens of their communities is a central component of meeting that challenge.

Colleges and Schools

- [Newark College of Engineering](#)
- [Hillier College of Architecture and Design](#)
- [Jordan Hu College of Science and Liberal Arts](#)
- [Martin Tuchman School of Management](#)
- [Albert Dorman Honors College](#)
- [Ying Wu College of Computing](#)

Research

Mirroring the growth evolution of the institution itself, NJIT has steadily increased its research output and, in 2019, was designated an R1 research university. NJIT has more than 140 research institutes, centers, and laboratories, up from 41 in 2010. NJIT is continuously growing its research enterprise with \$171 million in annual research expenditures in FY2023. The University aims for national and international prominence in research through new discoveries in areas ranging from medical sensors and devices to robotics, nanotechnology, and cybersecurity to next-generation materials, among other topics of vital importance in basic, applied, and translational research.

Housed within NJIT is also New Jersey Innovation Institute (NJII), a 501(c)(3) organization. As a unique NJIT corporation, NJII is exceptionally positioned to be agile, entrepreneurial, and opportunistic. NJII is focused on accelerating technology and fostering innovation to have a positive economic impact in New Jersey.

Students

NJIT embraces and takes seriously its purpose as a public university, and students are at the heart of that mission. More than 35 percent of undergraduate students are the first in their families to attend college, and about 45 percent receive Federal Pell Grants. In a typical year, more than 90 percent of undergraduate students have federally demonstrated financial need. Qualifications of incoming students have risen significantly in recent years as first-year applications have more than doubled since 2014. Students come to NJIT with an uncommon seriousness of purpose and willingness to work hard. This work ethic and drive manifests itself through successful careers and an inordinate amount of prestigious national honors.

Some 62 percent of students are from New Jersey, but more than 1,743 international students hail from over 100 countries. NJIT has earned a minority-serving institution (MSI) designation from the U.S. Department of Education. Under the umbrella MSI designation, NJIT has qualified as an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISI), with more than 18% of undergraduate students identifying as Asian American or Pacific Islander (AAPI). It is also an Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) with 29% of the undergraduate student population being of Hispanic origin. Students of color make up 58% percent of the student body, and NJIT has been nationally ranked by *Diverse* among the top 20 universities in the nation for graduating minority engineers.

As a polytechnic university with about 90 percent of our students studying in a STEM area, NJIT students can find others who share similar passions around science and technology with ease. Many students choose NJIT for the opportunity it provides, and there is a professional focus on campus. Students recognize their time at NJIT as the first step in a greater journey with the power to be transformational for both them and their families. The sense of opportunity is palpable. They are cognizant of student outcomes while on campus and excited about entering the workforce on the cutting edge.

Students are engaged as leaders on campus and are part of a diverse campus life. More than 50 percent of first-year students, and 25 percent of students overall, live on campus. Over 150 student clubs exist, and with a robust Student Senate, Graduate Student Association, a network of Greek organizations, and a culture of community service, student engagement in campus leadership positions is high. The NJIT Theater Arts Program offers students degree opportunities in the arts and boasts several theater and musical performances each year, while the NJIT E-sports team is nationally ranked.

Athletics

NJIT competes at the Division I level in 19 varsity sports as a member of the America East Conference. Student-athletes are dedicated scholars in their own right, with incoming SAT averages that mirror the class at large and a current streak of 30 consecutive semesters in which the student-athletes averaged above a 3.0 GPA. This past semester, 68 student-athletes achieved a 4.0 GPA. Additionally, the Joel and Diane Bloom Wellness and Events Center hosts intramural sports, fitness facilities, and a significant conference space.

Leadership

John A. Pelesko, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, Ph.D.



Dr. John A. Pelesko serves as Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Professor in the Department of Mathematical Sciences. Prior to joining NJIT on August 1, 2023, Dr. Pelesko served as Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Delaware from 2018-2023, as Associate Dean for the Natural Sciences in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Delaware from 2015-2018, and as Department Chair for the Department of Mathematical Sciences at the University of Delaware from 2011-2015.

Dr. Pelesko is a distinguished scholar and mathematician, whose research centers on mathematical modeling of physical systems, especially micro and nanoscale engineered systems. He is dedicated to student success and has conducted extensive research on integrating mathematical modeling, numerical simulation, and experimentation into undergraduate and graduate mathematics courses. Pelesko is the author of the highly regarded books *Unlocking the Mystery: Mathematical Modeling in Secondary Classrooms*, published in 2022; *Self Assembly: The Science of Things That Put Themselves Together*, published in 2007; and *Modeling MEMS and NEMS*, published in 2002; as well as several book chapters and numerous research articles.

Prior to joining the University of Delaware faculty in 2002, Pelesko was a member of the faculty at the Georgia Institute of Technology from 1999 to 2002 and held the position of Von Karman Instructor in the Department of Computing and Mathematical Sciences at the California Institute of Technology from 1997 to 1999.

He earned his bachelor's degree cum laude with distinction in pure mathematics at the University of Massachusetts at Boston and his Ph.D. in mathematical sciences at the New Jersey Institute of Technology.

Newark, New Jersey



Newark is New Jersey's largest city, with a population of over 300,000, and is undergoing revitalization through significant corporate investment in its downtown Central Ward and residential neighborhoods. The city is home to cultural landmarks such as the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) and the Prudential Center, which hosts the NHL's New Jersey Devils. Newark is also a hub for major corporations, including Prudential Financial, Panasonic, Audible.com, and PSEG.

The city, a center for intellectual discussion, offers numerous lectures, panels, and forums. Newark also has several higher education institutions, including NJIT, Rutgers University-Newark, Seton Hall University School of Law, and others.

Newark boasts several parks of historical significance, such as Branch Brook Park, which hosts the country's largest collection of cherry blossoms, and Weequahic Park, which features a natural lake and golf course. Both parks were designed by the Olmsted Brothers. Weequahic Park was once a venue for horse and car racing and even hosted President Ulysses S. Grant.

Located in the vibrant University Heights district, NJIT is just 20 minutes by train from New York City. Newark's transportation network, including Newark Penn Station and Newark Liberty International Airport, makes the city highly accessible. The University shares the neighborhood with other academic institutions, including Rutgers University and Seton Hall Law School, as well as the University Heights Science Park.

Newark continues to experience a cultural renaissance, with attractions such as NJPAC, Newark Symphony Hall, and the Newark Museum of Art, as well as a growing restaurant scene, especially in the Ironbound District. The district is known for its Portuguese restaurants and shops. The Prudential Center, also known as "The Rock," hosts over 175 events annually, including concerts and professional hockey games.

In addition to its corporate and cultural growth, Newark is focused on community development. NJIT contributes nearly 70,000 hours of community service annually and collaborates with local organizations through initiatives like Newark 2020: Hire, Buy, Live Local, which promotes employing residents, supporting local businesses, and providing housing incentives to NJIT employees.



Procedure for Candidacy

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.

WittKieffer is assisting NJIT in this search. For fullest consideration, candidate materials should be received by January 12, 2026.

Applications, nominations, and inquiries can be directed to: Alejandra Gillette-Teran and Corin Edwards

NJIT-SVPAA@wittkieffer.com

NJIT reasonably expects to pay within the range of \$270,000 - \$340,000.

As an EEO employer, NJIT is committed to building a diverse and inclusive teaching, research, and working environment and strongly encourages applications from individuals with disabilities, minorities, veterans, and women.

As a Minority Serving Institution with designations as an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPSI) and Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), NJIT is committed to embracing diversity, centering equity, and practicing inclusion with the goal of sustaining a culture of belonging. NJIT celebrates the diversity of our university community and recognizes the cultural and personal contributions each member of the community brings to NJIT. We strive to cultivate a campus culture that promotes inclusive excellence among our faculty, staff, students, and external partners. Sustaining and building upon our diverse community is critical to NJIT's continuing status as a premier research institution of higher education and a leading polytechnic university

Appendix

Organizational Chart

