



Vice President for Administration and Finance

Leadership Profile

August 2025



WittKieffer

Executive Summary

New Mexico State University (NMSU), an R-1 land grant institution and the oldest public institution of higher education in the state, seeks a strong executive and trusted financial leader as its next Vice President for Administration and Finance (VPAF).

Founded in 1888, NMSU has been dedicated to New Mexico's diverse population for more than a century, transforming lives through three main pursuits: teaching, research, and public service. With nearly 22,000 students across one residential campus, an online campus, three community college campuses, and 33 statewide Extension offices, NMSU's tagline – BE BOLD. Shape the Future.® – embodies the University's core values and vision to deliver solutions for the future.

The Vice President for Administration and Finance and Chief Financial Officer reports directly to [President Ferme](#), who was inaugurated in spring 2025. The VPAF serves as a key member of the executive leadership team and a strategic advisor to the President and Board of Regents and will play a pivotal role in shaping the University's fiscal and administrative future by overseeing major operational functions, including Finance, Budget, Human Resources, Facilities, Auxiliary Services, Real Estate Development and more, administering an operating and capital budget in excess of \$1 billion.

The successful candidate will bring significant leadership experience befitting an institution of NMSU's size and complexity, and will be recognized as a trusted, collaborative, and transparent leader. A bachelor's degree, evidence of progressive senior administrative advancement, with at least five years as a manager at a higher education institution, and proven leadership in finance, budgeting, strategic planning, resource management, and compliance are required. A related graduate degree is preferred.

The University is especially seeking individuals who are not afraid to work to achieve goals that 'punch' above the University's weight and demonstrate the hardiness of the Aggie mentality. NMSU is in the desert and from the desert, and hails from hardy traditions of the West. The people are kind and community oriented. They know that teaming and working together is the best way to obtain results. The future VPAF will embrace this spirit and develop and enhance it in their direct reports and in the staff who lead the University in fulfilling its objectives and goals.

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 New Mexico State University in this search. For full consideration, candidate materials should be received by October 9, 2025.

Application materials, nominations, and inquiries can be directed to:

Melody Rose, Ph.D. and Kim Migoya
NMSU-VPAF@wittkiffer.com

Role of the Vice President for Administration and Finance

The Vice President for Finance and Administration and Chief Financial Officer reports directly to the University President and serves as a key member of the executive leadership team and a strategic advisor to the President and Board of Regents.

With oversight of a complex, multi-entity system including the NMSU Foundation, Athletics, Arrowhead Innovation Network (NMSU's research park), three community colleges, and Aggie Development Inc., the VPAF ensures long-term financial health and operational excellence across the enterprise. In addition, the Deputy Athletic Director for Operations reports to the VPAF. The role requires broad leadership engagement with Government Relations and should expect to frequently provide information to Legislative leadership, as well as the Provost, College Deans, Enrollment Management, the Vice President of Research, NMSU Global, Ag Experiment Stations, and other institutional stakeholders.

Direct Reports:

- Assistant Vice President, Strategic Analysis and Planning
- Associate Vice President, Facilities and Services
- Associate Vice President, Administration and Finance
- Associate Vice President, Human Resources
- President and CEO, Aggie Development Inc.
- Assistant Vice President, Auxiliary Operations
- Deputy Athletics Director and COO
- Executive Administrative Assistant

Key responsibilities:

Strategic Financial Leadership

- Guide financial strategy and long-range planning to ensure fiscal health and growth.
- Manage the University's \$1 billion+ annual operating budget and capital outlay projects.
- Lead efforts to grow revenues, control costs, and build operating reserves.

Financial Operations and Compliance

- Oversee budgeting, forecasting, financial reporting, and audits.
- Ensure compliance with state, federal, and University financial regulations and standards.
- Supervise investment strategies, risk assessment, and internal controls.

Administrative Oversight

- Lead and support senior administrators overseeing:
 - **Human Resources** (compensation, benefits, employee relations, training)
 - **Facilities and Services** (architecture, capital projects, plant operations)
 - **Auxiliary Operations** (housing, dining, events, bookstore, parking services, golf course)
 - **Real Estate and Aggie Development Inc.**, including NMSU's statewide assets
 - **Athletic Financial Operations** (Dotted Line)

Stakeholder Engagement and Community Leadership

- Serve as liaison to key external partners including the New Mexico Higher Education Department, Legislative Finance Council, donors, and peer institutions.
- Collaborate with leadership across NMSU campuses and colleges on institutional priorities.
- Maintain visibility and active engagement in the Las Cruces and statewide community.

Executive Team and Cabinet Leadership

- Act as a core advisor on institutional strategy, contributing to key decisions across all administrative and academic areas.
- Support the President, Regents, Enrollment Management, and Research offices on financial and administrative planning matters.

Qualifications and Experience:

Required

- Bachelor's degree
- Evidence of progressive senior administrative advancement
- At least five years of experience managing large, complex budgets and administrative operations at a higher education institution or higher education oversight organization
- Proven leadership in finance, budgeting, strategic planning, resource management, and compliance

Preferred

- 10 or more years direct experience in two or more of the areas reporting to the VPAF
- Master's degree in a related field
- CPA, CFA, or other relevant certification
- Experience working closely with system or university governing boards
- Experience working with state government and agencies



Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

Key areas of responsibility for the next Vice President for Administration and Finance will include:

Modernize Systems and Processes for Effectiveness and Accountability: The next VPAF will modernize, standardize, and streamline all budget processes, creating greater predictability, transparency, and accountability. Precise budget timelines require widely understood and consistently practiced budget and reserve policies and processes, with clear lines of responsibility. Managing multiple, complex revenue streams requires simple and widely respected processes in order to ensure all revenue is responsibly utilized, resulting in greater financial effectiveness and accountability to all stakeholders.

Create an Operational Plan and Steward Regular Reporting: Key to a well-functioning finance office is the administration of systematic operations. The next VPAF will analyze process maps, make adjustments where necessary, and be a strong and trusted steward of resources through clear, consistent quarterly reporting. New systems or technologies may aid in the delivery of reliable reporting, while enhanced internal communication will ensure a team approach that is widely embraced.

Support and Develop a Strong, Central Finance Team: After a period of significant leadership change, the VPAF has the opportunity to learn the team, evaluate roles and assignments, and further develop talent to serve the University now and well into the future. Leveraging the full talent of the team will ensure all employees' investment in effective outcomes and shared responsibility for results. The team will work as a collaborative, consistent partner to the President and the broader campus community.

Build Trust with all University Stakeholders Through Sound Communication: The VPAF must build trust internally across units, clearly defining roles and responsibilities for budget development and implementation. Through positive working relationships with academic units and the Faculty Senate Budget Committee, the VPAF will instill a sense of trust and develop the community's financial literacy so that budgets are made and implemented with a shared purpose. Externally, the VPAF must continue to build rapport with the legislature, through presentations to the Department of Higher Education and the legislature's finance committees. In addition, the VPAF will regularly make presentations to the University's Board of Regents and create strategic dialogue with them regarding University finances.

Strengthen the Relationship with the University's Foundation: As with many universities of its size, NMSU has a separate [Foundation](#) to support the mission and strategy of the University. The VPAF has a critical role in creating synergy between the Foundation, its Board, and the University. Through a shared understanding of roles and responsibilities, the VPAF and Foundation CEO will align, share valuable information, and work in common purpose for the institution's betterment.





Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

The successful candidate for this position will bring demonstrated success in positions of leadership.

Additionally, the VPAF will possess the following knowledge, skills, and abilities essential to the role and most, if not all, of the qualifications outlined below:

- Excited to reside in and be an active part of the Las Cruces and New Mexico community. An appreciation for the city's small-town community and melting pot of cultures, and its unique desert and mountain landscape that offers year-round outdoor activities.
- Comprehensive financial and administrative background with deep experience and technical skills in budgetary management, financial and strategic planning, and enterprise risk management.
- Demonstrated success in managing the complex interplay of strategic financial planning and administrative goalsetting with an academic mission and a commitment to student success and research development.
- Exceptional leadership ability with demonstrated skills in strategic thinking, negotiation, and problem-solving in a dynamic and decentralized environment.
- A comprehensive understanding of the importance of research, creative activity, and scholarship within a land-grant institution. Knowledge of research funding, including the priorities and requirements set by federal agencies and other funding sources.
- Robust public speaking skills and the ability to serve as NMSU's senior leadership representative as needed at all levels.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills, capable of engaging broad stakeholder groups. Exceptional verbal and written communication skills, rooted in transparency and clarity, with the ability to synthesize complex financial information for constituent groups with varying levels of financial understanding.
- Knowledge of governmental regulations related to higher education and the ability to work successfully with state legislators to advance the University's mission and goals.
- Ability to inspire trust and build collaborative relationships across constituent groups using partnership, transparency, and humility to identify solutions and strategies and guide decision-making.

About New Mexico State University

Overview

New Mexico State University was founded in 1888 and is the oldest public institution of higher education in New Mexico. NMSU has been dedicated to New Mexico's diverse population for more than a century, transforming lives through three main pursuits: teaching, research, and public service.

NMSU provides access to higher education for New Mexicans, builds strong programs in emerging areas of research opportunity that have considerable potential for national impact and long-term growth, and provides Extension and outreach activities to improve New Mexico communities and strengthen families.

With nearly 22,000 students spread amongst the main Las Cruces residential campus, the NMSU Global online campus, three community college campuses, 12 Ag Experiment Stations, and 33 statewide Extension offices, NMSU's tagline is – BE BOLD. Shape the Future.®.

In fall 2024, the New Mexico State University system enrolled 22,751 students (+4.2% over 2023), driven by an expansion in eligibility for the state's Opportunity Scholarship and tech-based initiatives aimed at boosting recruitment and retention. With approximately one-in-three students at New Mexico State University identifying as first-generation college students, **NMSU was selected as a first-generation forward institution** in 2022.

NMSU is classified as an R1 university with very high spending and doctorate production by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

NMSU offers a vibrant campus life with nine museums and collections, professional theater and musical ensembles, NCAA Division 1 athletics, various intramural sports, and Aggie traditions that tell the stories of its past honor, its heritage, and celebrate the future. With a strongly connected network of more than 145,000 alums worldwide, Aggies are national leaders at the helm of major corporations, founders, and presidents of companies, making breakthroughs in their disciplines and creating positive change in their communities.



Academics

NMSU offers over 180 undergraduate degrees, 77 master's degrees, and 43 doctoral degrees, with over 70 programs 100% online. The University has five academic colleges, an honors college, and a graduate school.

Colleges or Schools

For more information on individual colleges, please see <https://nmsu.edu/academics/colleges.html>.

Community Colleges

Doña Ana Community College

Founded in 1973 in collaboration with local school districts to support occupational education, DACC is now a leading community college that provides transformative educational opportunities that meet the workforce needs of Doña Ana County. With a focus on access, innovation, and excellence, DACC offers over 90 degrees and certificates, adult education, specialized workforce training, and small business assistance.

Alamogordo Community College

Established in 1958 to serve the needs of the airmen and families stationed at Holloman Air Force Base, and located only 10 miles west of Alamogordo, NMSU Alamogordo is a community college with a long history of excellence. It is supported by a caring community of hard-working students and dedicated faculty and staff.

The campus is situated "on the hill" above Alamogordo and provides inspiring views of the city and the Tularosa Basin, offering the perfect venue for creative and motivated learning.

Grants Community College

NMSU Grants was established as a branch of New Mexico State University in 1968 through the cooperative efforts of New Mexico State University and Grants Municipal Schools. As a two-year branch community college, NMSU Grants serves the local communities in Cibola and McKinley counties, including the Pueblos of Acoma, Laguna, and Zuni, as well as To'hajiilee, San Mateo, San Rafael, Cubero, the City of Grants, and the Village of Milan.



Las Cruces, New Mexico

NMSU's main campus is in Las Cruces, New Mexico, a city known for its exceptional quality of life. Las Cruces offers an ideal environment for work and recreation, with more than 300 days of sunshine per year, a vibrant local culture, a low cost of living, and a relaxed pace of life. As part of the dynamic Borderlands region, the city is enriched by its proximity to El Paso, Texas, and Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, creating a unique cultural landscape shaped by diverse traditions, cuisine, and cross-border collaboration.

Las Cruces is also a paradise for outdoor enthusiasts, surrounded by vast public lands that provide access to millions of acres of desert and mountain landscapes. Residents can enjoy hiking, camping, backpacking, rock climbing, mountain biking, and birdwatching, all within easy reach of national forest systems such as the Gila, Lincoln, and Apache Kid Wilderness, as well as the Aldo Leopold Wilderness, Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument, and White Sands National Monument.



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NMSU Notice of Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity

New Mexico State University (NMSU) does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry, color, disability, gender identity, genetic information, national origin, race, religion, retaliation, serious medical condition, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, spousal affiliation or protected veteran status in its' programs and activities, including admissions, as required by state and federal law and University policy.

For more information, please see <https://equity.nmsu.edu/discrimination-and-equal-opportunity/discrimination-eo.html>.