


DICKINSON STATE UNIVERSITY

*Welcomes Applications and Nominations  
for the Position of*

**PRESIDENT**



*2024*



*Dickinson State University seeks a visionary leader to serve as its next president, embracing its mission of advancing intellectual, social, and economic development. As a regional comprehensive institution with a dual-mission designation, DSU values integrity, accessibility, and innovation. The president will drive academic excellence, forge collaborative relationships, and foster community engagement while preparing students for impactful lives. If you are ready to champion a diverse and dynamic university dedicated to workforce readiness and lifelong learning, DSU invites you to lead its next chapter of success.*



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## *The Role of the President*

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The president of Dickinson State University (DSU) serves as the chief executive officer of the institution, working under the North Dakota University System and reporting to the chancellor and State Board of Higher Education. This role involves overseeing DSU's senior leadership team, including the vice president, provost, chief operating officer, athletic director, and executive director of the DSU Heritage Foundation. The president collaborates with administrators to advance DSU's vision, mission, and strategic initiatives, ensuring the institution's academic quality, operational health, and community engagement align with state educational goals.

Dickinson State University (DSU) is at a pivotal point in history. The next president should embody a mix of strategic vision, community focus, and a deep commitment to the university's mission and values. Here are some key qualities DSU could benefit from in its next leader:





## STUDENT-CENTERED FOCUS

The president should prioritize student success and engagement. This includes understanding the unique needs of DSU's student population, such as first-generation students, non-traditional learners, and those from rural backgrounds. A strong advocate for student support services, affordable education, and career readiness programs would align well with DSU's goals.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

As a public university with deep ties to the surrounding region, DSU's president should build and maintain robust partnerships with local businesses, government entities, and community organizations. A leader who can serve as a bridge between the university and the community will strengthen DSU's role in regional economic development and community well-being.

## COMMITMENT TO ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION

The president should be committed to advancing academic programs that meet evolving workforce needs and align with DSU's designation as a dual mission institution. This includes supporting new and existing programs in areas like nursing, education, business, and agriculture, which are central to DSU's vision for the future.

## FUNDRAISING AND FINANCIAL ACUMEN

Strong skills in fundraising and budget management are vital for the sustainability of DSU's programs and facilities. The president should actively engage with alumni, donors, and state and federal sources to secure funding that supports DSU's strategic initiatives, scholarships, and campus development projects.

## ADVOCACY AND POLITICAL SAVVY

As a leader of a public institution, DSU's president needs to advocate for the university at the state level, especially regarding funding and policy decisions that impact higher education.

## VISIONARY LEADERSHIP WITH A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

The president should bring a clear vision for DSU's future, articulating a path forward that inspires the campus community. They should also be a collaborator, seeking input from faculty, staff, students, and community members, and empowering others to contribute to DSU's mission.





## Quick Facts



### ***Founded***

1918



### ***Location***

Dickinson, North Dakota



### ***Student Population***

Approximately 1,400



### ***Academic Programs***

Over 80 fields, including business, education, nursing, and agriculture, ranging from certificates to master's degrees



### ***Campus Size***

132 acres



### ***Athletics***

Competes in NAIA, over 20 varsity and club sports



### ***Mascot***

Blue Hawk



### ***Special Facilities***

- Theodore Roosevelt Center
- Biesiot Activities Center
- Sanford Sports Complex

## Organization History



Founded in 1918, Dickinson State University began as a teacher's college to serve the educational needs of southwestern North Dakota. Over a century, DSU has expanded to offer a wide range of undergraduate and professional programs, evolving into a cornerstone of academic and community life in the region. In 2020, recognizing the comprehensive nature of DSU's offerings, the University officially became a dual mission institution. This distinction allows Dickinson State to offer programming relevant to the needs of the community, ranging from career training to master's degrees.

## Location



Dickinson State University is conveniently located along Interstate 94, 1.5 hours west of the state capital of Bismarck. Dickinson is 36 miles east of the historic town of Medora. Medora is the future home of the \$100 million Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library. Theodore Roosevelt National Park, located just outside Medora is home to bison, pronghorn, elk, white-tailed and mule deer, wild horses, prairie dogs, and bighorn sheep. The Park offers visitors the opportunity to hike and play in one of the world's most fascinating geological formations. Larger cities such as Fargo, ND; Billings, MT; and Rapid City, SD, are all within a half-day's drive by car.

## The Area



Learning doesn't just happen in the classroom. Southwest North Dakota has many academic, cultural, and social events to enjoy. The nearby Maah Daah Hey Trail offers a 144-mile non-motorized single track through the Badlands of North Dakota. You can explore nature while cross-country skiing or biking one of the many trails in Dickinson. Go fishing, boating, or lounge on the beach at Lake Patterson or drive the Enchanted Highway to see the larger-than-life metal sculptures. Enjoy the indoor pool, waterslides, rock climbing or ice skating at the West River Community and Ice Centers.



# The University

## MISSION STATEMENT

Dickinson State University is a regional comprehensive institution within the North Dakota University System, whose primary role is to contribute to intellectual, social, economic, and cultural development, especially to southwestern North Dakota. The University's mission is to provide high-quality, accessible programs; to promote excellence in teaching and learning; to support scholarly and creative activities; and to provide service relevant to the economy, health, and quality of life for the citizens of the State of North Dakota.

## VISION

Dickinson State University will educate a diverse population through innovative teaching, learning, scholarship, and service fostering responsible citizens who impact the world.

## DUAL MISSION DESIGNATION

What does it mean to be Dual Mission?

Across the nation, higher education institutions are exploring what it means to them. For us, it means that we adapt to the workforce and remove barriers to ensure programs get running.

Being Dual Mission means we are responsive and relevant in meeting the educational needs of the citizens of southwest North Dakota as we:

- seek to understand the needs of students and the region,
- evaluate and develop programs and delivery methods to meet these needs,
- partner to offer workforce training, and
- establish streamlined pathways for degree attainment based on student educational goals.

## CORE VALUES

**Integrity:** We believe in being truthful, reliable, accountable, and fair as individuals and as an institution.

**Accessibility:** We define accessibility broadly to include diversity and inclusiveness in educating a globally responsible, astute, and engaged citizenry, as well as being flexible and responsive to our students (student-centeredness) and to our constituents (collaborative relationships).

**Excellence:** We value academic, scholarly, and creative excellence.

**Inquiry & Innovation:** We believe in the value and pursuit of life-long learning.



## FACULTY AND STAFF PROFILE

Institutional Headcount (Fall 2023 IPEDS)				FTE
Full-time Faculty	58	Part-time Faculty	90	<b>88</b>
Full-time Staff	101	Part-time Staff	45	<b>114</b>
Full-time Employees	159	Part-time Employees	129	<b>202</b>



## BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS

Dickinson State University's budget is designed to support academic programs, student services, and operational needs, while aligning with strategic goals. Funding comes from state appropriations, tuition, grants, and private donations. In the 2023-2025 biennium, DSU was allocated \$24,349,995 for operations as well as \$17.1 million for capital projects. The budget planning process incorporates input from the DSU community through shared governance and is guided by the legislative process. State legislators review DSU's funding requests, which allows for adjustments based on North Dakota's economic priorities and DSU's needs. This approach ensures fiscal responsibility while supporting investments in facilities, technology, and initiatives that benefit students and the community.





## The University (continued)



### ACCREDITATION

Dickinson State University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and holds specialized accreditations for programs including Nursing and Teacher Education.

The DSU Nursing Program at Dickinson State University is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN). ACEN supports the interests of nursing education, nursing practice, and the public by providing specialized accreditation for all levels of nursing education and transition-to-practice programs.

DSU's Teacher Education program is nationally accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). CAEP is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation as the professional accrediting body for teacher preparation. CAEP advances excellence in educator preparation through evidence-based accreditation that assures quality and supports continuous improvement to strengthen P-12 student learning. More than 900 educator preparation providers participate in the CAEP accreditation system.

### ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Dickinson State University provides over **80 academic programs**, including **certificates, associate, bachelor's, and master's degrees**. These offerings span four academic schools: the School of Applied Science, the School of Business and Entrepreneurship, the School of Education, and the School of Professional Studies, ensuring a variety of options to align with diverse educational goals. The recently introduced Master's programs in Business Administration, Sport Administration, Elementary Education, and Educational Leadership offer an affordable, high-quality education with flexible schedules and degree paths. Programs are available on-campus in Dickinson, online (synchronously and asynchronously), and at DSU's Bismarck and Williston locations. With a student-to-faculty ratio of 13:1, students benefit from a close-knit learning environment, fostering strong connections between faculty and students.

For a comprehensive list of departments, programs, and certificates, visit [www.dickinsonstate.edu/programs](http://www.dickinsonstate.edu/programs).



## ATHLETICS

Dickinson State University provides a vibrant on-campus experience, offering more than 20 sports, including baseball, basketball, cheerleading, cross country, esports, football, golf, powerlifting, rodeo, softball, track and field, trap shooting, volleyball, and wrestling. DSU is known as a campus of champions. The Blue Hawk teams were awarded the 2023 North Star Athletic Association's Commissioners Cup for the best all-around athletics program, securing this accolade in two of the last three years. The football team achieved its 10th consecutive conference championship in the fall of 2024, and the rodeo team competed at the College National Finals Rodeo. In cheer, DSU earned a fourth-place national ranking in both 2022 and 2023. The women's track and field team has also seen significant achievements, with individual national titles and a strong collective performance in major competitions.



## STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Students at Dickinson State University can engage in a variety of campus activities through numerous clubs and organizations. Options include athletics, academic, cultural, service-oriented, and recreational groups, allowing students to pursue personal interests, develop leadership skills, and build community connections. From academic honor societies to volunteer groups and student government, DSU offers many ways to get involved and enrich the college experience.

For a complete list of available clubs and organizations, visit [www.dickinsonstate.edu/studentlife](http://www.dickinsonstate.edu/studentlife).



## STUDENT POPULATION

According to the Fall 2024 enrollment census, DSU has 1,400 students and a fulltime enrollment of credit hours of 1,120 students. Students are primarily from North Dakota (60%), Montana (20%), Wyoming (3%), and South Dakota (3%). DSU also welcomes over 30 international students from 15 different countries.





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# Strategic Plan

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The Strategic Plan 2021-2026 is based on Dickinson State University's mission, vision, and values. The goals and objectives are aligned with DSU's Mission and the State Board of Higher Education's (SBHE) mission and goals.

## **1** *Provide relevant programs students want, when and where they want them.*

- Develop an enrollment and retention training strategy.
- Develop marketing strategies geared specifically to promote programs.
- Expand access to Academic Units through innovative and nontraditional delivery methods (including Dual Mission and CTE Programs).
- Reduce barriers to registering and advising returning and transfer students.
- Create articulation pathways with other institutions, including high schools.
- Ensure programs are relevant, valuable, and timely.

## **2** *Develop a financial plan that will support our mission and vision.*

- Tie funding and budget to the Strategic Plan.
- Upgrade facilities that support and enhance the educational experience of students and employees.
- Ensure the price of attendance is regionally competitive and clearly stated.
- Provide resources to programs with increasing student demand.

## **3** *Equip students for success.*

- Increase students' persistence through improved participation, retention, and completion rates.
- Maximize affordability as it relates to students' ability to persist.
- Improve access to mental health services.
- Provide opportunities for students to start and pursue academic success in part-time and non-traditional pathways.

## **4** *Continue efforts to invest in faculty and staff in support of academic and professional goals.*

- Provide resources for faculty and staff development.
- Support and recognize scholarly activity.
- Provide opportunities for staff and faculty advancement and promotion.

## **5 Foster an inclusive campus community that supports student-centered learning experiences.**

- Support structured student activities to foster a sense of community.
- Provide cross-cultural interaction opportunities.
- Promote co-curricular programming across campus.

## **6 Actively cultivate relationships and partnerships with the community and constituents in support of our mission and vision.**

- Increase K-12 and CTE partnerships.
- Foster community events hosted on campus.
- Work with area employers to strengthen relationships that allow for placement of DSU interns and graduates.
- Utilize campus/community advisory boards for workforce feedback.
- Work collaboratively with the DSU Heritage Foundation to continue to grow endowments and scholarships.

## **7 Work directly with industries to create relevant programs that prepare students to succeed in the workforce.**

- Seek to understand the needs of students and the region.
- Evaluate and develop programs and delivery methods.
- Partner to offer workforce training.
- Establish streamlined pathways for degree attainment based on students' career goals.





# Competitive Factors

## S

### STRENGTHS

- Faculty/Staff Excellence
- Dual Mission Growth
- Program Offerings
- Value and Personalized Attention
- Community Support
- Workforce Pipeline
- Program Accreditations

## C

### CHALLENGES

- Enrollment/Recruitment/Retention
- Budget Pressures
- Professional Development for Faculty/Staff
- Integrated Budget and Planning
- Mental Health Needs
- Distance Education Solutions
- Physical Plant Needs

## O

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Programming that Meets Industry Needs
- Developed Distance Education Infrastructure
- Foundation Scholarships
- Dual Credit/Early Entry Growth
- CTE Workforce Training Collaboration
- Increased Community Engagement
- Partnerships

## T

### THREATS

- Pandemic Impacts
- Competing Priorities/Deadlines
- Cost of Education
- Competition
- Attracting/Retaining Employees
- Complacency and Allegiance to Status Quo



## SHARED GOVERNANCE

Shared governance at Dickinson State University reflects a commitment to collaborative decision-making, allowing faculty, staff, students, and administration to contribute meaningfully to the university's direction and priorities. Through active participation in committees and councils, stakeholders engage in discussions and decisions on academic policies, campus initiatives, and resource allocation, ensuring diverse perspectives shape DSU's future. This inclusive approach fosters transparency, accountability, and a community-focused environment that aligns with DSU's mission to serve the educational and developmental needs of its students and broader community.

## Dickinson State University Heritage Foundation

The DSU Heritage Foundation (DSUHF), established in 2016 as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, supports Dickinson State University through scholarships, building projects, and endowments funded by private donations. The Foundation includes 23 board members, a team of full- and part-time staff, and student workers, all dedicated to DSUHF's mission. The Foundation provides over 700 scholarships annually, valued at \$1.4 million, and contributes to campus development projects, such as the Nursing Simulation Lab, Athletic Weight Room, Equestrian Studies arena, Sanford Sports Complex, and upgrades to agricultural facilities.

The DSUHF is also the home of the DSU Alumni Association. The Dickinson State University story began in 1918 when 104 students were part of the first class at Dickinson Normal School. Since that time, more than 14,000 alumni have passed through the halls at Dickinson State, sharing values of lifelong learning and service to others.



[www.dsuheritagefoundation.org](http://www.dsuheritagefoundation.org)

## North Dakota State Board of Higher Education

The State Board of Higher Education is the policy-setting and advocacy body for the North Dakota University System and the governing body for North Dakota's 11 publicly supported colleges and universities. The SBHE also oversees the NDSU Extension Service and Agricultural Research Stations, Northern Crops Institute, State Forest Service and the Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute.

The SBHE is made up of seven citizen members appointed to four-year terms by the governor and one student appointed by the governor to serve a one-year term. The Council of College Faculties selects the board's non-voting faculty advisor, and the North Dakota State Staff Senate selects the board's non-voting staff advisor.

### Members:

- Mr. Tim Mihalick, *Chair*
- Ms. Danita Bye, *Vice Chair*
- Dr. Casey Ryan
- Mr. Jeffry Volk
- Mr. Curtis Biller
- Mr. Kevin Black
- Mr. Donald Campbell
- Mr. Maxwell Eriksrud, *Student Member*
- Mr. Michael Linnell, *Staff Advisor*
- Dr. Lisa Montplaisir, *Faculty Advisor*



## PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE MEMBERS

### CO-CHAIRS

**Ms. Danita Bye**

*SBHE Vice Chair*

**Mr. Ty Orton**

*DSU Acting President*

### SENIOR SYSTEM REPRESENTATIVE

**Mr. Mark Gorenflo**

*(ex officio)*

### TWO FACULTY MEMBERS

**Dr. Liz Freedman**

*Assistant Professor and Faculty Senate member*

**Mr. Thadd O'Donnell**

*Assistant Professor and Head Golf Coach*

### TWO STAFF REPRESENTATIVES

**Mr. Chris Meek**

*Director of Financial Aid*

**Ms. McKenzie Springer**

*Admissions Visit Coordinator/Administrative Assistant*

### UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT

**Mr. Carl Askins**

### GRADUATE STUDENT

**Ms. Dallis Mitchell**

### ACADEMIC/STUDENT AFFAIRS VICE PRESIDENT

**Dr. Holly Gruhlke**

*Vice President*

### ALUMNI REPRESENTATIVE/FOUNDATION MEMBER

**Mr. Steve Perdue**

*Treasurer of the DSU Heritage Foundation and DSU alumnus*

### EXTERNAL CONSTITUENCY MEMBER

**Ms. Vaune Johnson**

*DSU alumna and longtime Dickinson banker*

### CHANCELLOR

**Dr. Mark Hagerott**

*(ex officio, non-voting)*

### CHANCELLOR CABINET REPRESENTATIVE

**Dr. Bernell Hirning**

*President, Williston State College*

## PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH TIMELINE

<b>November 14-22</b>	Virtual listening sessions with Dickinson State University
<b>December 3</b>	First Meeting of Search Committee (Virtual)
<b>December 16</b>	Presidential Search launched
<b>February 7</b>	Deadline for applications (best consideration)
<b>February 21</b>	Second Meeting of Search Committee (Virtual) Search Committee identifies semifinalist candidates
<b>Week of March 3</b> days as needed	Third Meeting of Search Committee (Virtual) Search Committee interviews semifinalist candidates Finalist candidates identified
<b>March 17-21</b> days as needed	Finalist candidates meet university constituencies Search Committee interviews candidates
<b>Week of March 17</b>	Final Meeting of the Search Committee (In person) Search Committee makes final recommendations
<b>March 27</b>	State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) Meeting SBHE interviews candidates and appoints President
<b>April 1-June 30</b> On or about <b>July 1, 2025</b>	Transition in leadership DSU President-elect assumes office

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## **APPLICATIONS, NOMINATIONS, AND EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST**

To assure best consideration, applications should be received by February 7, 2025, and must include:

- A letter of interest addressing the key qualities described on page 4 of this Profile;
- A current résumé or curriculum vitae; and
- A list of five professional references with each person's position, email address, and telephone numbers. References will not be contacted without prior authorization from the candidate.

Application materials should be submitted in PDF format through the AGB Search portal using this link: [Dickinson State University - President](#).

Applications will remain confidential through the semifinalist stage. Following campus visits by finalists, the State Board of Higher Education will conduct interviews and make the final selection. Successful completion of a criminal history background check on the finalists is required. The new President will assume office by or before July 1, 2025.

Please direct any nominations, expressions of interest, or questions regarding the application process to [dickinsonstatepresident@agbsearch.com](mailto:dickinsonstatepresident@agbsearch.com) or to the AGB Search consultants assisting the university with this search:

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***EEO Statement***

*The NDUS is an Equal Opportunity / Affirmative Action employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or national origin. Women, minorities, veterans and individuals with disabilities are encouraged to apply.*

***Veteran's Preference***

*Pursuant to NDCC 37-19.1-02(4), this position is not subject to veteran's preference.*

*Applicants must be legally authorized to work in the United States. There is no sponsorship available for this position.*





# DICKINSON STATE UNIVERSITY

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[www.dickinsonstate.edu](http://www.dickinsonstate.edu)