

The Search
for the Next
President
— of —
**Nebraska
Wesleyan
University**



The Board of Governors and its Presidential Search Committee announce the search for the 17th president of Nebraska Wesleyan University. The search begins after more than a decade of dedicated and successful leadership by Frederik Ohles, who has announced his retirement. This search comes as the university is experiencing strong fiscal stability and outstanding momentum in enrollment, fundraising and academic and athletic achievement.

Mission

Nebraska Wesleyan University is an academic community dedicated to intellectual and personal growth within the context of a liberal arts education and in an environment of Christian concern.

Core values

Community

Diversity

Excellence

Liberal arts

Personal attention

Stewardship





Nebraska Wesleyan University

Nebraska Wesleyan University is a thriving, growing, comprehensive, liberal arts-based institution with approximately 2,100 students. Its academic programs are rooted in an enduring commitment to excellence; a belief in the power of personal attention; a resounding focus on teaching and learning; and a strong tradition of shared governance. NWU has a long history of producing remarkable results.

Chartered by Methodists in 1887, Nebraska Wesleyan has an ongoing, beneficial relationship with the United Methodist Church. The university welcomed its first class of 96 women and men in 1888, taught by a faculty of eight in a single building. In its early years, the university grew to include a college of liberal arts; a music conservatory; schools of art, business and education; and elementary and secondary schools. During the 1930s and 1940s, NWU eliminated the various schools, closed its pre-collegiate programs and reorganized as an undergraduate liberal arts college.

During the second half of the 20th century, Nebraska Wesleyan benefited from long, stable presidencies. Successive leaders built out the campus and strengthened the quality of the academic program. Over time standards were raised and enrollment grew. Gradually, the institution once again took on the features of a university.

Today, Nebraska Wesleyan is a vibrant and innovative institution known for academic excellence and rigor. Its five baccalaureate degrees include the Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Fine Arts, Bachelor of Music, Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Science in Nursing. Its four master's degrees have been introduced within the last 20 years: Master of Science in Nursing (2000), Master of Business Administration (2014), Master of Science in Nursing/Master of Business Administration joint degree (2014) and a Master of Education (2016). NWU will launch a Master of Social Work in 2019 and is in the planning stages of a Master of Athletic Training.

NWU's largest undergraduate programs are business/accounting/economics, nursing, health and human performance, psychology and biology. Traditional undergraduate tuition, student fees and auxiliary services generate 90 percent of revenue, part-time students generate 2 percent, adult and graduate students 6 percent and Wesleyan Honors Academy 2 percent.

Adult and graduate education returned to NWU gradually over the past four decades. In the late 1970s, the institution began offering some courses to adults through the Wesleyan Institute for Lifelong Learning. In 2000, Nebraska Wesleyan began to include a small number of graduate degrees. In 2004, Nebraska Wesleyan opened its first instructional site for adult and graduate programs 50 miles away in Omaha, Nebraska's largest city. In 2014, the Omaha facility moved to a spacious 12,000-square-foot site at 140th Street and West Dodge Road, a premier location.

Through NWU's Honors Academy, high school juniors and seniors earn college credits by enrolling in courses taught by master's degree-holding high school teachers who serve as adjunct members of the Nebraska Wesleyan faculty. NWU is Nebraska's only institution accredited by the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP). Honors Academy courses transfer to all two- and four-year colleges in Nebraska and 95 percent of post-secondary institutions across the country. Today, the Wesleyan Honors Academy serves 1,800 students in 70 public and parochial schools around the state. It is also part of the traditional student recruitment strategy.



The Higher Learning Commission has continuously accredited NWU since 1914. Individual academic programs are accredited or approved by the following professional bodies:

Athletic training: Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education

Chemistry: American Chemical Society

Education: National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education and approved by the Nebraska Department of Education

Music: National Association of Schools of Music

Nursing: Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education

Social work: Council on Social Work Education

Preparations are underway for NWU's next HLC site visit in February 2020.

U.S. News & World Report has recognized Nebraska Wesleyan in the Regional Universities-Midwest category since 2016, following its recent growth as a comprehensive university. NWU is in the top 10 percent of all colleges and universities in this category, ranking 17th among 175 institutions. NWU has also been recognized favorably by *The Princeton Review*, *Forbes*, *Colleges of Distinction* and *Money Magazine*. It is a founding member of the Arbor Day Foundation's Tree Campus USA program and has been named a military-friendly school.

Teaching and learning

New student enrollment for fall 2018 reached a record high with 487 first-year and 59 transfer students. Traditional student enrollment has grown 20 percent in the past four years versus

the previous four. Fourteen percent of the domestic student body identify as racially or ethnically diverse. A dozen modern residence halls provide housing to 870 undergraduate students, while six sororities and fraternities house 270 students. Traditional undergraduates whose homes are not in Lincoln and vicinity are expected to live on campus through the junior year. It is estimated that 65 to 70 percent of traditionally-aged NWU students work part time while studying, and 29.5 percent of the full-time traditional student body is Federal Pell Grant-eligible.

Of NWU's more than 2,100 students, about three-quarters are traditionally aged full-time undergraduates. Students choose from 134 [majors, minors and pre-professional programs](#). In 2014, Nebraska Wesleyan launched the [Archway Curriculum](#), a new program of general education for all traditional and adult undergraduate students. It integrates learning across disciplines, enhances learning through non-classroom experiences and weaves skill development throughout the academic program. The Archway Curriculum has been nationally heralded within higher education as a progressive model of liberal learning. This curriculum ensures that every student has an experience-rich education through internships, research projects, service learning or study abroad. NWU's distinctive Capitol Hill Internship Program (CHIP) connects NWU students to an array of exciting Washington, D.C., internships. CHIP students live on Capitol Hill and work in government and non-government offices and take related classes and seminars to make the most of their internship experiences.

Prestigious scholarships

Nebraska Wesleyan students consistently win national prestigious scholarships.

2 Rhodes

6 Truman

8 Goldwater

56 Fulbright

46 Gilman

11 Phi Kappa Phi



NWU's emphasis on experience yields extraordinary student outcomes: two Rhodes scholars (most recently in 2006), 56 Fulbright awards (Nebraska's top producer), six Truman scholars and eight Goldwater scholars. Two-thirds of all NWU graduates go on to graduate or professional school within five years of graduation. NWU celebrates an 86 percent medical school placement rate, a teacher placement rate above 90 percent and a dental school placement rate of 90 percent (achieved consistently since 2002). The theatre program — recognized in August 2018 by *OnStage Blog* as one of the top 25 programs in the country — is extraordinary for an institution of this type, with 100 majors and a new main stage production opening every two to three weeks during the academic year.

NWU's commitment to academic excellence and personal attention to students is consistently reflected in the strength and accomplishments of its gifted faculty, including three who have been named the Carnegie Foundation "Teacher of the Year" in Nebraska. Ninety-two percent of the 109 full-time faculty hold the terminal degree appropriate to their field. With a student-faculty ratio of 11:1 and an average class size of 16, the university is known for a rigorous and nurturing learning environment, enhanced by the faculty's deserved reputation for effective teaching and mentoring. A typical full-time teaching load is 12 credits per semester or equivalent. NWU contributes to the vitality of the faculty with an unusually generous sabbatical program that provides 100 percent of salary to professors who commit to spend the sabbatical year overseas. The president of the faculty and the chair of the Faculty Affairs Committee serve two-year terms as full members of the Board of Governors.



Recent faculty accomplishments

United Methodist Church, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry's Cutting Edge Curriculum Award, 2018

Karla Jensen
professor of communication studies

March of Dimes, Nebraska Nurse of the Year for Academic Excellence, 2018

Sue Gabriel
associate professor of nursing

Academy of American Poets, James Laughlin Award, 2017

Mary Hickman
visiting assistant professor of English

Research and calibration efforts for NASA's New Horizons Pluto mission and ESA's Rosetta space probe, 2016

Nathaniel Cunningham
associate professor of physics

Co-curricular experiences

Students can participate in more than 90 organizations and clubs including those related to the arts, faith, service and special interests. There is also a healthy and energetic Greek life community on campus. Global Service Learning (GSL) is the nation's only entirely student-led group of its type, and it is an impactful organization on NWU's campus. GSL coordinates and participates in local service projects twice a month and participates in national and international service learning projects each year. In keeping with NWU's commitment to shared governance, two students are identified each year who serve as full members of the NWU Board of Governors.



Nebraska Wesleyan's Prairie Wolves athletic program has a rich tradition of excellence. Twenty-one varsity sports are offered (11 for men, 10 for women). More than 30 percent of traditional students compete in intercollegiate athletics. Many students participate in an intramural program with 22 individual and team options.



NWU is Nebraska's only NCAA Division III institution. In 2016, NWU joined the American Rivers Conference (formerly the Iowa Intercollegiate Athletic Conference). The Prairie Wolves have celebrated many conference championships as well as national championships in 2018 in men's basketball and in 2006 in men's golf. The women's 4x400 relay team has won five consecutive national titles.

The university is a nationally-recognized leader for combined excellence in academics and athletics, ranking eighth in the nation (among all divisions, all time) with 173 Academic All-Americans and sixth in the nation for NCAA Postgraduate Scholarships.





Strategic planning

The next president will be expected to craft a shared vision leading to the next strategic plan for Nebraska Wesleyan. Since 2017, Nebraska Wesleyan has been guided by its current strategic plan, Archway Plan 2019, which drives the university's six priorities:



1. Grow and diversify revenue streams.
2. Focus on essential programs and expenses.
3. Hire, retain and support faculty and staff dedicated to meeting strategic objectives.
4. Create a dynamic living and learning environment.
5. Identify, recruit and retain students destined for success at Nebraska Wesleyan University.
6. Revise the university's organizational structure to maximize the achievement of institutional priorities.

The plan outlines Nebraska Wesleyan's strategic priorities through May 31, 2019. Its implementation has led to:

- > The university's restructuring from two colleges into one cohesive unit;
- > The hiring of a dean of graduate programs;
- > An increase in fall-to-spring first-year retention to 92.8 percent;
- > An increase in fall-to-fall first-year retention to 83 percent (exceeding an 81 percent target);
- > Ethnic/racial diversity of non-instructional staff rising to 9 percent and to 4 percent for full-time faculty;
- > Construction of the Duane W. Acklie Hall of Science and an athletic practice facility, residence hall renovations, lighting updates in O'Donnell Auditorium; and
- > Launch of a Master of Social Work degree.





Fundraising

Bold Designs: The Campaign for Nebraska Wesleyan University has been underway since 2012. It will conclude May 31, 2019. The campaign exceeded its \$62 million goal by September 2018, with commitments totaling \$63.2 million. Yearly gift receipts recently have been \$10-12 million, up from \$3-5 million a decade ago.

Bold Designs focuses on four main priorities:

- 1 Create premier learning spaces.
- 2 Open doors for generations of students through scholarships.
- 3 Recruit and support the best faculty.
- 4 Advance life-changing student experiences.



NWyou

Nebraska Wesleyan's quality reputation for progressive learning through a focus on individual achievement is represented by the university's brand signature, NWyou. Through experiential learning, service, study abroad and research opportunities, Nebraska Wesleyan University provides the hands-on academic and practical experiences that empower students to explore, grow and succeed in life.

Lincoln and NWU

Nebraska Wesleyan's Lincoln location brings with it an inviting combination of opportunity and energy. With a population of 280,000, Nebraska's growing and youthful capital city has been dubbed the "Silicon Prairie" for its many high-tech startup firms. The American Institute for Economic Research (AIER) has named Lincoln a top college city in the U.S. and a top place for college graduates to work. The city has a rich cultural life with theaters, museums, art galleries, a children's science museum and zoo, 6,000 acres of public parks and excellent trails. Lincoln celebrates diversity in all its forms and proudly serves as a refugee resettlement city. At any given time, more than 65 different languages are spoken in Lincoln's excellent public and private K-12 school systems. [The Lincoln Convention and Visitors Bureau](#) offers more about Lincoln's services and amenities.

Located in the University Place neighborhood with its own community feel, NWU's campus features the striking Richardsonian architecture of the university's original building, Old Main (1887). An architecturally-eclectic group of

academic and performance halls, modern student residences, and well-equipped athletic facilities are situated amid spacious lawns on the 55-acre urban campus.

Numerous facility improvements and additions have been made over the last 10 years, including two significant residence hall renovations, expansion of the Abel Stadium press box, improved spaces in the Roy G. Story Student Center, O'Donnell Auditorium lighting, and the addition of a nursing skills lab, learning commons in Cochrane-Woods Library and an athletic practice facility.

In January 2019, NWU will open the 81,000-square-foot Duane W. Acklie Hall of Science to house programs in biology, chemistry and psychology. The new science center will embrace NWU's emphasis on experience, providing greater opportunity for dynamic, hands-on learning environments, collaboration between academic departments, and open and visible laboratory spaces. A new quad will connect Olin Hall of Science, Old Main and Rogers Center for Fine Arts with the new Duane W. Acklie Hall of Science.





Financial stewardship

Nebraska Wesleyan regularly balances its operating budget, typically with a small margin. The university operates with approximately \$40 million of revenues net of financial aid. The endowment is \$59 million. During the past decade, NWU has limited its annual endowment draw to 4.5 percent.

Tuition and fees, room and board for the 2018-2019 academic year are \$43,824 for a first-year student. The budgeted blended discount rate for 2018-2019 is 54.5 percent.

The Board of Governors and NWU administration have long taken a conservative approach to institutional finances. Long-term bonded debt is \$17 million. Standard and Poor's has awarded Nebraska Wesleyan an A-Stable credit rating. Debt refinancing and cash reserves provided resources in 2012 and 2015 for thorough renovations of two residence halls and in 2017 for construction of an athletic practice facility.

Nebraska Wesleyan was recognized as one of 90 institutions to be awarded with a 2018 CASE Educational Fundraising Award. This award from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) "recognizes exemplary fundraising programs and activities." NWU has "not only demonstrated the

highest levels of professionalism and best practice in its fundraising efforts, it has contributed to the betterment of educational advancement worldwide."

As a teaching-intensive institution, NWU has secured nationally-competitive grants for development of the innovative Archway Curriculum (Andrew W. Mellon Foundation) and for initiatives in science education and access (National Science Foundation). The new Duane W. Acklie Hall of Science is built entirely with private donor and foundation funds exceeding \$28 million.

Leadership

Nebraska Wesleyan's Board of Governors (currently 32 members; the bylaws allow for up to 38 members) establishes general, academic and financial policies and appoints and oversees the university president. The board is comprised of alumni, business and community leaders, faculty, students, parents and friends of the university.

The President's Board of Advisors provides advice to the president and helps identify challenges and opportunities for NWU. The 24-member advisory committee includes alumni, parents or children of alumni and other friends of the university. The PBA meets twice each year.

Administrative Council

The administrative leadership of the university is a seven-member Administrative Council:

- > President
- > Provost
- > Vice president for finance and administration
- > Vice president for advancement
- > Vice president for campus community
- > Vice president for enrollment management
- > University minister



NWU alumni

- > **20,771** active alumni records
- > Alumni are successful health care, business and industry leaders, educators, religious leaders, government officials, athletes, artists and philanthropists who make a positive impact in their communities
- > Notable alumni include:
Kent Haruf, novelist;
Harry Huge, international attorney;
Brenda Bence, author, senior executive coach and branding expert;
Jason Licht, general manager, Tampa Bay Buccaneers (right);
Emily Kinney, television actress
- > **300** alumni physicians in Nebraska
- > **800** alumni teachers in Nebraska
- > Alumni giving rate: **15 percent**



Student demographics

Caucasian: **81 percent**

Hispanic/Latino: **6 percent**

Black or African American: **3 percent**

Asian: **2 percent**

American Indian, Alaska Native: **<1 percent**

Native Hawaiian: **<1 percent**

Two or more races: **3 percent**

Not reported: **5 percent**

Full-time employees

Faculty: **109**

Staff: **160**

Agenda for Leadership for Nebraska Wesleyan University's Next President

The next president of Nebraska Wesleyan University will join the institution at a time of positive momentum on all fronts. The president will have the opportunity to shape a vision for growth for Nebraska Wesleyan that is rooted in the university's commitment to academic excellence while also cultivating the financial resources necessary to support that vision. She or he will find a dedicated community eager to build on its strong foundation and to partner in the development of a plan that will position Nebraska Wesleyan among the finest liberal arts universities in the nation.

Nebraska Wesleyan's next president must be prepared by experience and disposition to work closely with the entire community to continue the institution's trajectory of excellence, to celebrate its robust learning environment and to lead the university to even greater academic innovation and distinction. She or he will be expected to guide the articulation of goals that are both inspiring and achievable while nourishing the community's will, spirit and resources needed to attain them. Among the most important priorities for the next president are:

Sustain and build on momentum

Nebraska Wesleyan University is on a strong trajectory and is celebrating many recent successes, including award-winning signature academic programs, a successful capital campaign, the building of a new science center, a strong reputation in the region, growth in enrollment and a consistently-balanced budget. The next president will build on this excellent foundation, as well as identify areas for innovative growth and enhance the university's reputation nationally and internationally. The president will communicate Nebraska Wesleyan University's aspirations in a way that inspires commitment, pride and action. Nebraska Wesleyan's president will also be knowledgeable about issues impacting higher education and be able to identify ways to involve the university in those dialogues in a manner that will strengthen its recognition and appeal among prospective students, parents, alumni, friends, donors, peers at other universities, government and nonprofit entities and additional influential stakeholders.

Develop and execute a long-range vision and related strategic planning

Changes in presidential leadership offer institutions a unique point in time to review, assess and invite conversations about plans for the future. The president will provide visionary leadership, a strong academic perspective and ambitious long-range strategic planning skills to grow an outstanding academic enterprise in areas that are a natural extension of Nebraska Wesleyan's strengths. The new president will be willing to take calculated risks, while being anticipatory and proactive in identifying issues that may arise for Nebraska Wesleyan as the landscape for residential liberal arts institutions evolves. It is expected that the new president will lead an inclusive strategic planning process early in her or his tenure.



Develop, diversify and steward resources

The next president must be a strong financial manager, knowledgeable about academic business models, keenly aware of the broader higher education landscape, innovative with regard to fundraising and forging new revenue streams, and capable of adjusting the business plan to maintain and improve the university's financial security. As the university's chief ambassador and fundraiser, the next president will be expected to lead a campaign of significance during her or his tenure and to work with all constituencies to enrich Nebraska Wesleyan's growing philanthropic culture. An ongoing commitment to building the endowment through donations, strategic investment management and disciplined spending will continue.

Manage growth thoughtfully and ensure related necessary infrastructure and support

The next president of Nebraska Wesleyan will encourage thoughtful and healthy growth for the institution in a variety of areas, including the diversification of the student body and implementing strategic new programs, particularly at the graduate and adult-learner level. She or he must have a firm understanding of enrollment management and the ever-growing challenges surrounding both undergraduate and graduate admissions and retention at private, residential liberal arts universities. She or he must have a student-centric approach and will seek to ensure the university has the necessary human capital, modern facilities and technology to support the needs of the current and future generation of learners. Building technological infrastructure, increasing faculty and staff salaries, and addressing issues of deferred maintenance will be priorities.

Foster innovation, collaboration and a culture of transparency

The next president will have a positive, engaging and influential presence on campus and beyond. Her or his capacity to ask thoughtful questions, listen carefully, shape discourse, empower others and foster collegiality and innovation will be of paramount importance. Supporting faculty and staff and honoring their central and significant contributions to the university will be crucial. Modeling and encouraging transparent decision-making will promote trust and nourish the spirit of mutual respect that is fundamental to the university's identity and culture of shared governance.

Champion diversity and inclusion efforts

The president will play a central role in signaling to the university community the ongoing importance of Nebraska Wesleyan's efforts to diversify the student body, faculty and staff, especially in regard to racial and ethnic diversity. Moreover, she or he will expand a culture in which widely diverse values, experiences and ideas are welcomed and viewed as essential in the development of academic excellence. These are crucial tasks for all institutions of higher learning, and it is important that the president possess the skills, passion and commitment to advance these efforts.

Be an authentic and engaging advocate of the liberal arts university with strong pre-professional programs serving an evolving student body

NWU's next president will be a strong advocate for the value and meaning of a liberal arts education on a multi-faceted campus that includes strong pre-professional and graduate programs. The next president should engage as a leader in national and international conversations about the future of liberal education. She or he should be deeply thoughtful and articulate about the shifting higher education landscape and serving the next generation of students. Issues such as the role of technology, access and affordability, career readiness and the value of a liberal education over a lifetime should all be topics of passionate interest to the next president.

Desired Attributes for the Next President

The Presidential Search Committee seeks candidates who will embrace the distinctive nature and core values of Nebraska Wesleyan University and inspire its faculty, students, staff, alumni and Board of Governors. Candidates should display the ability to lead with wisdom, honesty and compassion. Nebraska Wesleyan University's next president will be a servant leader with experience managing a complex organization. She or he will bring a highly relational approach, outstanding communication skills, authenticity, self-confidence balanced with humility, integrity of the highest order and a strong work ethic. While a clear understanding of higher education is preferred, the Presidential Search Committee is eager to consider many different pathways to the Nebraska Wesleyan University presidency. Candidates possessing a terminal degree will be preferred.

The successful candidate will be:

- > A visionary, innovative and strategic thinker with a proven ability to articulate a clear and coherent vision, implement the vision and a related plan, and unify constituents behind them;
- > An accomplished leader in higher education, or a comparable complex setting, and a passionate, engaged and sincere advocate for liberal arts education;
- > An inclusive leader with an understanding of and respect for Nebraska Wesleyan University's shared governance structure coupled with an abiding respect for the significant contributions of faculty and staff;
- > A gifted and proven fundraiser, who is experienced in building a positive culture of philanthropy, and who has demonstrated the ability to cultivate, solicit and steward major gift prospects and donors;
- > An entrepreneurial person with strong financial acumen who will aid the university in matching aspirations with finite resources while thinking creatively about growth opportunities;
- > An evidence-based leader who is well versed in enrollment management;
- > A technologically-savvy person with a fluent understanding of pedagogical strategies and technological approaches that enhance student learning and program delivery;
- > A person who embraces the institution's shared core values as well as appreciates and respects Nebraska Wesleyan's relationship with the United Methodist Church;
- > A person of global perspective who is committed to promoting and celebrating inclusion and diversity in its many forms;
- > An accessible leader who embraces the visible nature of the role and engages with all constituencies of the university;
- > An expert communicator who is eager to share the story of Nebraska Wesleyan to various constituents;
- > An inclusive and receptive decision-maker who builds consensus, prioritizes well and communicates decisions with promptness and care;
- > An affirming team builder and coach who will empower others and optimize the effectiveness of a talented and committed leadership team; and
- > An engaging, authentic and resilient leader with good humor who will provide respected, long-term leadership.



The Process of Candidacy

The Nebraska Wesleyan University Presidential Search Committee will begin to evaluate the applicant pool during the fall of 2018. Although applications will be welcomed until the time that a new president is selected, candidates should submit materials by November 19, 2018 to ensure fullest consideration. The new president is expected to begin work on July 1, 2019.

Applications should include a letter of candidacy that responds to the agenda for leadership and the desired attributes for a new president, a complete résumé or vita, and the names and contact information (phone and email) of five professional references, none of whom will be contacted without the formal permission of the candidate. All application materials will be considered in full confidence and should be submitted electronically to NWUpresident@storbecksearch.com.

In this search, Nebraska Wesleyan University is partnering with Ms. Julie E. Tea, partner, Ms. Susan Van Gilder, partner, and Ms. Julie Williams-Krishnan, senior associate at Storbeck/Pimentel & Associates, LP. Nominators and prospective candidates are encouraged to contact them at NWUpresident@storbecksearch.com to arrange confidential conversations.

Diversity is a core value of Nebraska Wesleyan University's mission and we embrace it as a source of strength. Nebraska Wesleyan University provides equal educational and employment opportunities to qualified persons in all areas of university operation without regard to religion or creed, age, genetic information, gender identity and expression, sexual identity and orientation, veteran status, disability, marital status, race, or national or ethnic origin, in compliance with state and federal laws, including but not limited to Title XII, Title IX and the ADA.