

# Academic Search



## Presidential Search

**Dr. Nancy Crimmin**  
Senior Consultant

**Dr. William Kibler**  
Senior Consultant

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# ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search was founded in 1976, and was the first organization in the nation committed to meeting the unique recruiting needs of higher education. The firm has remained in continuous and expanding operation for more than 45 years, and currently engages a team of more than 80 highly trained and experienced consultants serving public and private colleges and universities, as well as higher education-related organizations. Academic Search is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the American Academic Leadership Institute.

The mission of the firm remains to provide colleges and universities with highly professional, institutionally focused search services modeled on best recruiting practices across all business sectors.

## **ACADEMIC SEARCH EXPERIENCE AND AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION**

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Academic Search currently averages 100-200 searches per fiscal year, of which more than 95% are performed on behalf of institutions or systems of higher education. The remaining searches are facilitated for organizations related to higher education such as national associations serving colleges and universities, or institution-based entities such as libraries, museums, performing arts venues, and medical centers.

The highest percentage of searches performed by Academic Search are for president/chancellor or cabinet officers, and for top academic leadership at the dean level. Primary disciplines for which services are engaged are administration and academic administration, business and finance, advancement, student affairs, admissions and enrollment, diversity and inclusion, and general counsel and other professional positions. Within academic leadership, searches for decanal-level personnel in education, business, arts and humanities, and STEM disciplines including nursing and other healthcare areas form the bulk of the firm's services.

## **THE ACADEMIC SEARCH GUARANTEE**

Our goal is to stay with you through a successful conclusion to the search. If the hiring authority is not satisfied with the candidates recommended or a search is not concluded for other reasons, we will offer to conduct either an extended search or a second search. Typically, we ask that a second search be launched within 12 months of the original contract.

If an appointed candidate is terminated for cause within 12 months of appointment, or the appointee voluntarily leaves within the first 12 months after first reporting to work, we will conduct a second search without any additional professional fee, as long as the search commences within three months after the position is vacated. In each of these scenarios, the only additional charges will be related to discretionary expenses approved by Fitchburg State related to candidate travel, consultant travel, advertising, and background checks, and an administrative fee of \$10,000.

# A LONG RECORD OF PROVEN OUTCOMES

**TOP 40**  
SEARCH FIRMS

Academic Search has been named to Hunt Scanlon's list of the top 40 search firms in the nation serving higher education and top 50 across all industry sectors.

MORE THAN

**2,400**

EXECUTIVE  
SEARCHES

Since its inception, Academic Search has completed more than 2,400 executive searches.

MORE THAN

**6 IN 10**

In the past five years, 64% of all searches conducted by Academic Search have resulted in the appointment of women and/or persons of color.

**99%**

SATISFACTION  
RATE

Academic Search has a 99% satisfaction rating from its partner institutions, based on post-search feedback. In addition, 59% of our engagements over the last five years have originated from existing or former partner institutions who re-engage our organization after an initial successful experience.

APPOINTEES  
WHO STAY

The remarkably high percentage of appointees who remain in office five years later attests to the ways Academic Search matches institutional needs with qualified applicants.

**92%** PRESIDENTS/  
CHANCELLORS

**82%** VICE PRESIDENTS/  
VICE CHANCELLORS

**87%** DEANS

# OUR STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE

Hiring qualified and effective new team members is critical to the life of any institution of higher education. Academic Search is focused on partnering with colleges and universities to attract the best teams possible.

We pledge to advocate enthusiastically for Fitchburg State University (Fitchburg State or the University), to attend to the needs of your search committee, to advise candidates clearly and ethically, and to manage the search process so that you can focus on selecting the top candidate for President (President).

The Academic Search **value proposition** is based on providing service in five ways that you can rely on unequivocally to achieve your goals in this search: expertise, excellence, reach, trust, and equity and inclusion.

## EXPERTISE

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Academic Search brings a deep understanding of college and university processes emanating from specialization in higher education searches for more than 45 years. Our accomplished consultants understand intimately the qualities that make a successful executive leader. Our team includes thoughtful advisors who have vast professional networks, extensive higher education leadership experience, and decades of recruitment expertise. Fitchburg State will benefit directly from their hands-on involvement in the recruiting, evaluation, and vetting of your candidate pool.

## EXCELLENCE

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Your search process will be customized to your institutional culture and your particular needs at this time, but it is grounded in the shared experience of best practices. Our consultants will design and manage a search process that not only achieves deliverables in the proposed timeline but promotes a positive impression of the University in the higher education community. At every stage of the search, you can count on expert advisement and counsel from the search consultants as well as the entire Academic Search team and its collective knowledge of excellent practices.

## OUR MISSION

Founded by higher education leaders more than four decades ago, Academic Search is dedicated to the principle that the value we offer to partner institutions is combining best recruitment practices with deep knowledge and experience. By providing outstanding executive recruitment services, executive consulting, and transition support, in partnership with our parent organization, the American Academic Leadership Institute, we continue to fulfill our mission to enhance institutional capacity, increase diversity so that leadership reflects the students being served, and promote excellence in higher education leadership.

## REACH

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You will benefit from the nationwide connections forged over decades by Academic Search. Our consultants and experts will be the ones who get to know you and recruit on your behalf. The strategies for advertising and promoting the search for a new President will bring awareness of this opportunity to both current and rising leaders in higher education.

## TRUST

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You can rely on your partners at Academic Search to approach this process with honesty and integrity. You will see this in our regular updates on the progress of the search and careful approach to maintaining confidentiality. You can count on your search consultants to be trustworthy partners, working with discretion and professionalism, not just with Fitchburg State University and your constituents but also in interacting with candidates, with whom we build a deep trust.

## EQUITY AND INCLUSION

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We are dedicated to making a difference through the vital role we play in serving the cause of higher education. Your search will be exposed to the broadest range of potential candidates through strategic placement of position announcements and direct contact with prospective applicants who represent the entire spectrum of diversity. We will work with the University to mitigate bias and infuse equity and inclusion throughout the search process. Academic Search has come together with other members of the Association of Executive Search and Leadership Consultants (AESC) in signing the [AESC Diversity Pledge](#); we have an internal Steering Committee for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; fund fellowships for leadership development programs for persons from underrepresented groups; and make diversity a high priority in our recruitment of internal team members.

# YOUR SEARCH TEAM

In selecting Academic Search, you are choosing an experienced search team who will take the time to get to know you and your needs and priorities. We propose Dr. Nancy Crimmin and Dr. William (Bill) Kibler to partner with you as the lead consultants on your presidential search.

Dr. Crimmin, a Worcester County resident, and Dr. Kibler bring a valuable combination of experiences in higher education administration and executive recruitment. They are well versed in the personalization and opportunities an institution such as Fitchburg State University can offer to its students. Fitchburg State University has a vibrant history of providing a transformational educational experience in a student-ready environment with exceptional preparation and training for an agile workforce to serve the community. Building on the mission, vision, and values with a commitment to creating a thriving and diverse community of learners emphasizing innovation, student success, and overcoming barriers has served the community well. The momentum created by the *2020-2025 Strategic Plan* will certainly influence the search for a new leader of the institution. The new President will join a community dedicated to creating a student-ready university that provides equitable access to high-quality education and offering all students the opportunity to apply their learning so that they are career-ready.

The Fitchburg community embraces the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education's Equity Agenda, challenging public higher education to enhance the economic and social mobility for all citizens, but particularly for those that have historically been underserved and underrepresented, especially students of color. In further support of the Equity Agenda, Fitchburg State has embedded the principles of education justice, being a student-ready campus, and inclusive excellence as pillars of the strategic plan.

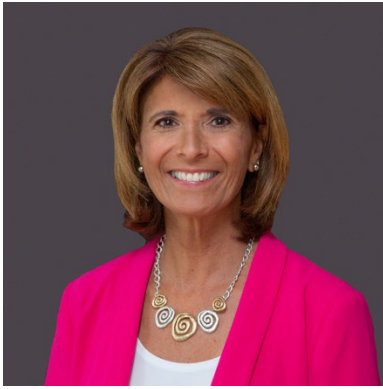
Your search team is also acutely aware of the challenges state universities across the Commonwealth are facing and the impact of those challenges for the President and their Board of Trustees. Enrollment, affordability, equity, challenges with connectivity and accessibility, hunger and homelessness are examples of some of the challenges facing leadership in the next several years and beyond.

Dr. Crimmin and Dr. Kibler are committed to creating a diverse, highly qualified pool of candidates in the search for a future-focused, innovative, and strategic leader to ensure long-term stability and sustainability for Fitchburg State University.

Dr. Crimmin and Dr. Kibler will be the primary contacts and lead recruiters for your search. To assist you and your search committee, they will be responsible for establishing and maintaining close communication with the search committee and search chair; meeting with key campus officials; and providing leadership for all phases of the search. Dr. Crimmin and Dr. Kibler will participate in search committee meetings and partner with the search chair to

prepare meeting needs, such as agendas or other handouts. In addition, they will guide the committee through an objective candidate evaluation and selection process, advise the committee and campus on interview best practices, and conduct due diligence on selected candidates. Additional details regarding our search process and methodology are discussed later in this proposal. The following pages introduce you to your search team; full curricula vitae are available upon request.





## **DR. NANCY CRIMMIN** **SENIOR CONSULTANT AND SENIOR** **EXECUTIVE COACH**

Dr. Nancy Crimmin knows first-hand the importance of hiring the best candidates to fill executive staff positions. Her three-decade career in higher education included academic and student affairs director, dean, vice president, and senior vice president roles, and she was president of a private college. With more than 25 years of experience as a hiring manager, Dr. Crimmin is a senior consultant with a deep-rooted commitment to serving student populations by recruiting potential appointees who will excel.

Dr. Crimmin has always loved interacting directly with students. She believes sincere conversations with them are crucial to learning about campus culture and student perceptions. In her various administrative positions, from assistant to the registrar at Curry College to president of Becker College, and everything in between, Dr. Crimmin prioritized the needs of the students, and she was committed to removing barriers and creating opportunities for success.

As a senior consultant, honesty, transparency, and open communication are Dr. Crimmin's driving forces. She joined Academic Search in October 2021 and quickly found success in her ability to assemble diverse candidate pools filled with immense talent and creating positive working relationships with search committees. She's meticulous in her recruiting and researching process, and she presents the search and hiring committees with the critical of information that will help them make their selection. She is timely, thorough, and sincere, and she is devoted to finding the right candidates who have the potential to thrive.

Although Dr. Crimmin spent most of her career at private schools, she finds joy in searching for all sorts of positions at every type of college and university. She enjoys challenges, as she is an excellent problem solver and forward thinker, and Dr. Crimmin is motivated to go the extra mile to ensure she's maintaining the integrity of the search. Dr. Crimmin has a vast professional network, including the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), of which she was a senior fellow, board member, and chair of the 2017 annual conference. She has been widely recognized for her contributions to higher education, and her honors include the NASPA Foundation's highest accolade, the Pillar of the Profession Award.

The Massachusetts native earned her Bachelor of Arts in psychology from Stonehill College, a Catholic institution, and a master's degree in counseling and student personnel services from Springfield College. She also earned her doctorate in educational leadership from Johnson & Wales University and has completed her certification in executive coaching. She is a trained facilitator for the Leadership 360 profile, EQi – 2.0 Emotional Intelligence inventory and Gallup Strengths.

# NANCY P CRIMMIN, ED.D.

## SENIOR CONSULTANT

### EDUCATION

- Johnson & Wales University, Doctorate, Education in Educational Leadership
- Springfield College, Master's Degree, Counseling and Student Personnel Services
- Stonehill College, Baccalaureate Degree

### ADMINISTRATIVE AND TEACHING APPOINTMENTS

- Senior Consultant and Senior Executive Coach, Academic Search
- Senior Fellow, NASPA Center for First-generation Student Success
- President, Becker College
- Senior Vice President, Chief Academic and Student Affairs Officer, Becker College
- Vice President for Student Affairs, Becker College
- Dean of Campus Life, Assumption College
- Admissions Counselor and Academic Advisor, Alverno College
- Assistant to the Registrar, Curry College

### SIGNIFICANT HONORS AND AWARDS

- Pillar of the Profession Award, NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
- NASPA Region 1-Continuous Service Award
- Mary Tobin Senior Student Affairs Award, Massachusetts Association for Women in Education

### SELECTED PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

- Board Member, Devereaux Advanced Behavioral Health and the Devereaux School
- Board Member, Women's Initiative of Central Massachusetts
- Board Member, Association of Independent Colleges and Universities in Massachusetts
- Chair of the Board, Higher Education Consortium of Central Massachusetts (HECCMA)
- Chair, New England Collegiate Conference for Division III Athletics
- Member, Division III NCAA Presidents Council
- Member, The President's Trust of the Association of American Colleges and Universities



## **DR. WILLIAM KIBLER** **SENIOR CONSULTANT** **SENIOR EXECUTIVE COACH**

Dr. William Kibler is a senior consultant driven by his commitment to integrity, clarity, and honesty. He authored the honor codes at two Division I state universities, and while serving as president of a small public university in rural Texas, he maintained an open-door policy to sustain direct communication with students, staff, and faculty. Dr. Kibler even provided his personal home and cell phone numbers to students and parents at orientation, attesting to his commitment to remain in close contact.

Although Dr. Kibler can perform any type of search, based on his experience at public universities, his expertise lies in searches within state systems. He joined Academic Search in 2020 and has discovered a deep sense of satisfaction and pride when he helps an institution hire a candidate who will make a long-lasting positive impact.

After more than four decades in higher education, Dr. Kibler's familiarity with university governance, student issues, and the challenges that arise in an administration is extensive. He spent 37 years in student affairs at the University of Florida, Texas A&M University, and Mississippi State University, giving him first-hand familiarity with the issues students face and the best ways to overcome them. He then spent six years as President of Sul Ross State University, a regional comprehensive university in West Texas.

At Texas A&M and MSU, Dr. Kibler authored the schools' honor codes that are still in effect. He also served as a founding board member and president of both the Association for Student Conduct Administration and the International Center for Academic Integrity. Much of his research work for his doctorate focused on academic integrity, and he has authored, co-authored, and edited books and publications on the subject, as well as on student conduct, discipline, judicial affairs, and student affairs administration.

A first-generation college student, Dr. Kibler earned his associate degree from Pensacola Junior College and completed his bachelor's degree in economics at the University of Florida. He also received master's and specialist's degrees in counselor education from UF and a doctorate in higher education administration from Texas A&M. Additionally, Dr. Kibler is a graduate of the American Association of State Colleges & Universities' Millennium Leadership Institute.

In 2014, Dr. Bill Kibler was named the 12th president of Sul Ross State University. During his six years in Alpine, TX, Dr. Kibler helped implement an ambitious 10-year strategic plan, achieved full re-accreditation with no recommendations, oversaw unprecedented retention rates, improved facilities, and more. Upon his retirement in 2020, he was named president emeritus. He resides in College Station with his wife, Pam, and together they continue a nearly 30-year commitment to foster parenting. The Kiblers recently provided care for their 40th foster child.

**WILLIAM L. KIBLER, PH.D.**  
**SENIOR CONSULTANT & SENIOR EXECUTIVE COACH**

## **EDUCATION**

- Texas A & M University, Doctorate, Education Administration
- University of Florida, Specialist in Education, Counselor Education
- University of Florida, Master's Degree, Counselor Education
- University of Florida, Baccalaureate Degree, Economics
- Pensacola Junior College, Associate of Arts, Science

## **ADMINISTRATIVE AND TEACHING APPOINTMENTS**

- Senior Consultant and Senior Executive Coach, Academic Search
- President, Sul Ross State University
- Vice President for Student Affairs, Mississippi State University
- Professor, Counselor Education, Mississippi State University
- Vice President for Student Affairs (Interim), Texas A & M University
- Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, Texas A & M University
- Associate Professor of Educational Administration and Human Resource Development, Texas A & M University
- Associate Director of Student Affairs, Texas A & M University
- Assistant Director of Student Affairs, Texas A & M University
- Assistant Dean of Students, University of Florida
- Assistant to the Dean of Students, University of Florida

## **SIGNIFICANT HONORS AND AWARDS**

- Awardee, Donald McCabe Award for Lifetime Achievement, International Center for Academic Integrity, Clemson University
- Pillar of the Profession Award, NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
- Member, Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society
- Awardee, D. Parker Young Award for Outstanding Contributions, Association for Student Judicial Affairs
- T.M. Stinnett Fellowship Award, Department of Educational Administration, Texas A & M University
- Member, Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society

## SEARCH SUPPORT

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Your search for the new President will be supported by a trained, specialized, and experienced team of professionals who will assist you in managing all aspects of the search process.

Your team will include an **associate consultant**, who has vast knowledge of and expertise in higher education. The associate will work closely with Dr. Crimmin and Dr. Kibler, your search committee, and a designated campus liaison or the search chair in handling the logistical and administrative matters of the search. At every stage of the search process, the associate is available to reduce the burden on the campus community. The associate will work with the appropriate individuals to coordinate the details of candidate interviews, while ensuring that institutional travel policies and procedures are followed, to handle technological needs, and to manage organizational details like expense reports.

In addition to direct search support, Academic Search provides resources for the search team and for you that include:

### Administrative Support

Although Dr. Crimmin and Dr. Kibler will serve as the primary contacts for the search and will be responsible for all deliverables, our entire consulting team is available to add expertise to the process. Academic Search **President, Dr. Jay Lemons**, and **Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Dr. Shawn Hartman** may be contacted for additional support. They are ready to be of service to assist you in meeting your needs and are available to your search chair and hiring authority at any point in the search. At the outset, Dr. Hartman works quickly with your purchasing department or other appropriate institutional officials to execute your standard contract or our simple three-page contract, as he is the authorized agent for Academic Search. He will also ensure that any of your questions concerning billing and invoices are addressed by the finance team.

### Technological Support

Technology can be a serious challenge in a search. Your search committee will benefit from our in-house technical team, which includes the **Director of Operations, Ms. Kelly Daniels**. She can help the search committee by arranging video interviews or meetings at any stage in the search process, handling the creation of campus surveys, and helping to support virtual ADA compliance needs. In addition, they manage the security and reliability of your search committee website, where all application materials are housed, and are available to assist committee members with any website-related issues.

If you are interested in learning more about our team, biographies can be found at [www.academicsearch.org/our-team](http://www.academicsearch.org/our-team).

# RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Academic Search has performed successful recruitment projects for institutions in 49 states and nine foreign countries in the last 10 years. Academic Search has assisted the following institutions of higher education with presidential searches in recent years.

Institution	State	Position
Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges	California	President
Alabama A & M University	Alabama	President
American University of Nigeria	Adamawa	Vice Chancellor/President
Antioch College	Ohio	President
Aquinas College	Michigan	President
Association of Independent Colleges and Universities in New Jersey (AICUNJ)	New Jersey	President
Athens State University	Alabama	President
Augustana College	Illinois	President
Avila University	Missouri	President
Bakersfield College	California	President
Berea College	Kentucky	President
Black Hills State University	South Dakota	President
Bloomfield College	New Jersey	President
California Community Colleges	California	State Chancellor
California Lutheran University	California	President
Carlow University	Pennsylvania	President
Centenary University	New Jersey	President
Central State University	Ohio	President
Chadron State College	Nebraska	President
Chatham University	Pennsylvania	President
Christian Brothers University	Tennessee	President
Cleary University	Michigan	President
Cleveland State Community College	Tennessee	President
College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University	Minnesota	President
Concordia College at Moorhead	Minnesota	President

Coppin State University	Maryland	President
Council of Independent Colleges	Washington, DC	President
Council of Independent Colleges in Virginia	Virginia	President
Delaware County Community College	Pennsylvania	President
Delta State University	Mississippi	President
Eckerd College	Florida	President
Finlandia University	Michigan	President
Frederick Community College	Maryland	President
Gannon University	Pennsylvania	President
Grays Harbor College	Washington	President
Greenfield Community College	Massachusetts	President
Guttman Community College	New York	President
Hartwick College	New York	President
HERS-Higher Education Resource Services	Colorado	President
Houghton University	New York	President
ILIFF School of Theology	Colorado	President and CEO
Independent Colleges and Universities of Texas	Texas	President
Institute for Clinical Social Work	Illinois	President
Jackson State Community College	Tennessee	President
Jackson State University	Mississippi	President
Kentucky Community and Technical College System	Kentucky	President, Big Sandy College
Kentucky Wesleyan College	Kentucky	President
Kern Community College District	California	Chancellor
Lagrange College	Georgia	President
LaGuardia Community College	New York	President
Lower Columbia College	Washington	President
Manchester University	Indiana	President
Maria College of Albany	New York	President
Marshall University	West Virginia	President
Mary Baldwin University	Virginia	President

Maryland Independent College and University Association	Maryland	President
Massachusetts Department of Higher Education	Massachusetts	Commissioner
Mesa Community College	Arizona	President
Muskingum University	Ohio	Provost
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities	Washington, DC	President
Nevada System of Higher Education	Nevada	Chancellor
New England Commission on Higher Education	Massachusetts	President
Newman University	Kansas	President
Northeast State Community College	Tennessee	President
Northeast Wisconsin Technical College	Wisconsin	President
Norwich University	Vermont	President
Ohio Northern University	Ohio	President
Ohio Wesleyan University	Ohio	President
Paradise Valley Community College	Arizona	President
Peru State College	Nebraska	President
Phoenix College	Arizona	President
Pittsburgh Technical College	Pennsylvania	President
Roanoke College	Virginia	President
Rockford University	Illinois	President
Rust College	Mississippi	President
Saint Elizabeth University	New Jersey	President
Saint Michael's College	Vermont	President
Salisbury University	Maryland	President
Sam Houston State University	Texas	President
San Diego Community College District	California	Chancellor
Santa Fe Community College	New Mexico	President
Scottsdale Community College	Arizona	President
Shoreline Community College	Washington	President
Simpson College	Iowa	President



Skagit Valley College	Washington	President
St. John's University-New York	NY	Interim President
St. Mary's University	Texas	President
St. Norbert College	Wisconsin	President
St. Thomas Aquinas College	New York	President
SUNY College at Oswego	New York	President
SUNY Empire State College	New York	President
Texas A&M University-Texarkana	Texas	President
Texas Wesleyan University	Texas	President
The University of Alabama in Huntsville	Alabama	President
United Lutheran Seminary	Pennsylvania	President
University of Maine System	Maine	Chancellor
University of North Texas at Dallas	Texas	Chancellor
University of Pittsburgh-Greensburg	Pennsylvania	President
University of Redlands	California	President
University of South Carolina-Aiken	South Carolina	Chancellor
University of South Carolina-Upstate	South Carolina	Chancellor
University of Southern Maine	Maine	President
Virginia Community College System Office	Virginia	Chancellor
Walsh University	Ohio	President
Wenatchee Valley College	Washington	President
Wesleyan College	Georgia	President
West Virginia University at Parkersburg	West Virginia	President
Whitworth University	Washington	President
Wilson College	Pennsylvania	President
Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU)	Wisconsin	President and CEO

# CUSTOMIZED METHODOLOGY

Academic Search defined best practices in executive search in higher education over 45 years ago. We continually seek creative and innovative ways to pair our decades of experience and wisdom with special attention to your institution's unique customs and culture. Working closely with your team, Dr. Crimmin and Dr. Kibler will customize this comprehensive search process to satisfy your specific needs and priorities.

FROM CONTRACT  
SIGNING TO WEEK 4

## 1. ORGANIZE

Your successful search begins with clear organization, communication, and collaboration with stakeholders. We will work closely with you to set specific priorities and goals for each phase of the search process. Working with the search committee and the hiring authority, Dr. Crimmin and Dr. Kibler will facilitate this phase of the process, as needed, by:

- advising on the composition of the search committee and the charge to the committee;
- collaborating with institutional officials on available resources to educate committee members on how to confront and mitigate bias;
- guiding the committee on best practices for an ethical and confidential search process;
- developing a clear search timeline;
- meeting with key stakeholders for their perspectives on the culture of the institution and the qualities needed in the next President;
- developing a profile and advertisement to reach potential candidates and nominators;
- establishing a communication plan to keep candidates, the search committee, and campus constituents appropriately apprised of search progress; and
- meeting with officials in Human Resources and other departments to ensure an understanding of institutional policies and procedures and compliance with local, state, and federal regulations.


***Deliverables: search timeline, position profile, advertisement, advertising plan that ensures exposure to diverse individuals***

WEEKS  
5-12

## 2. RECRUIT

In this phase of the search, Dr. Crimmin and Dr. Kibler will be recruiting extensively, reaching broad and diverse populations of qualified individuals, and advocating directly on behalf of Fitchburg State to elicit exceptional applicants. You can count on the confidential and hands-on services they are performing:

- targeted email outreach to prospective candidates and nominators through the extensive proprietary database of Academic Search;
- targeted messages to leadership development organizations;
- individual, personal conversations with prospective candidates to promote Fitchburg State and this opportunity for the new President; and
- communication with those in Academic Search's consultants' personal networks.


 ***Deliverables: recruitment of a diverse pool of highly qualified candidates, updates on search progress, creation of a password-protected website to house candidate materials***

WEEKS  
13-16

## 3. EVALUATE, SELECT, AND INTERVIEW SEMIFINALIST CANDIDATES

Once a pool of candidates has been created, we will partner with your search committee in designing and implementing a selection process tailored to your needs and campus culture. Dr. Crimmin and Dr. Kibler will work with the search committee to lend expertise to these important steps:

- developing an objective, equitable review method for evaluating candidate materials, including instrumentation and training to the search committee in candidate review technique;
- sharing information and insights gained from conversations with candidates and others; and
- designing a uniform process for conducting semifinalist interviews.

 ***Deliverables: sharing of information gathered on candidates; sample evaluation tool and interview questions; assistance with interview logistics and selection of semifinalists; continued communication with candidates regarding their status in the search***

During the closing stage of the search, Dr. Crimmin and Dr. Kibler will assist the search committee in identifying finalists, provide counsel on the finalist interviews, conduct due diligence, and assist in shepherding the top candidate through the appointment process. Specifically, you can rely on assistance in these areas:

- providing guidelines for finalist visits and interviews;
- administering feedback surveys from all who meet with finalists;
- facilitating reference calls and media and background checks, consistent with laws and regulations that govern Fitchburg State University;
- assisting the search committee in making recommendations to the hiring authority; and
- communicating with candidates on their status in the search and announcing the appointment once it is finalized and public.



***Deliverables: assistance with selection of finalists; background, media, and reference checks on finalist candidates; follow-up communication with candidates; transition-related consultation***

## SAMPLE TIMELINE

At the initiation of search activity, a firm written schedule specific to the needs of each search will be developed collaboratively and approved by Fitchburg State University. Thereafter, Academic Search will adhere to that schedule unless modified with the approval of the University.

STEPS	TIMEFRAME
1. Organize <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin work with the search chair and hiring authority</li> <li>• Conduct pre-search visits</li> <li>• Finalize the position profile and advertising plan</li> </ul>	Upon Contract Signing
2. Recruit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement a broad nationwide outreach</li> <li>• Elicit candidacies and individually follow up on each nomination</li> <li>• Make direct contact with prospects and candidates</li> <li>• Accept and process applicant materials</li> </ul>	December 2023-February 2024
3. Evaluate, Select, and Interview Semifinalist Candidates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a dedicated online site for candidate materials</li> <li>• Assist the search committee in establishing its evaluation process</li> <li>• Manage candidate logistics and facilitate interviews</li> <li>• *Conduct preliminary due diligence</li> </ul>	March 2024
4. Close the Search <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist in planning and execution of finalist interviews</li> <li>• *Complete final due diligence</li> <li>• Assist as needed with contract negotiations</li> <li>• Update candidates, nominators, and references of the outcome and assist with search closure</li> <li>• New President is appointed</li> </ul>	April 2024

\*Initial research including social media investigation as well as Lexis Nexis and Google searches will be conducted on each semifinalist candidate. For finalists, Academic Search will continue its research and use a properly credentialed and licensed third-party firm to conduct FCRA background checks, including degree verifications.

# OUR ELEVATED STANDARDS

## EMPHASIS ON BUILDING A DIVERSE CANDIDATE POOL

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You can count on Academic Search to uphold the highest standards for ensuring attention to equity and inclusion in our searches. Successful candidates come from multiple cultural and ideological backgrounds, from a diverse array of institutions, and with a variety of identities. It is not only important that a diverse pool of candidates be recruited for the search but that candidates be treated with the utmost regard.

Based on experience and best practices, Dr. Crimmin and Dr. Kibler will assist Fitchburg State as needed to guarantee respectful consideration to equity and inclusion. We can:

- Assist you in understanding and addressing the market forces and cultural/social factors that may have an influence on attracting a diverse candidate pool.
- Draft a non-gendered, inclusive profile and advertisement for use in recruitment.
- Propose an advertising plan that includes venues assuring exposure of the opportunity to professionals across the diversity spectrum.
- Develop objective criteria to evaluate candidates based on the parameters and requirements of the position.
- Publish in all position advertisements your inclusion policy and an invitation for all qualified prospects to apply.
- Ensure all search materials are ADA compliant.
- Intentionally seek nominations and candidacies of individuals with a history of employment in minority-serving institutions.
- Develop for reporting purposes a survey to capture demographic information about applicants, following campus procedures and adhering to federal, state, and local regulations.
- Provide or partner in providing trainings and workshops to reduce bias in the search.
- Proactively address issues of bias with the search chair.

**IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS, 64% OF SEARCHES CONDUCTED BY ACADEMIC SEARCH HAVE RESULTED IN THE PLACEMENT OF INDIVIDUALS IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS FROM VARIOUS DIVERSE COMMUNITIES.**

## **OUTSTANDING NETWORKS AND RECRUITMENT TOOLS**

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Partnering with Academic Search connects Fitchburg State University with the networks and high-impact tools that improve the quality of the candidate pool. Dr. Crimmin and Dr. Kibler will bring extensive personal networks from which to seek nominations and applications and will work with our other consultants to access their networks as well. In addition, Fitchburg State will benefit from Academic Search's connections to leadership development programs through the American Academic Leadership Institute, our parent organization, and the many other programs that we sponsor. We view leadership development as part of our mission, and our direct support of these programs allows us to access diverse and exceptional talent.

Your search for the new President will also be strengthened because of the extensive database Academic Search maintains, and from which Dr. Crimmin and Dr. Kibler can proactively recruit candidates who possess the skills and attributes you seek.

## **OUTREACH TO NON-TRADITIONAL CANDIDATES**

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You may be interested in “non-traditional candidates” who come from outside higher education and can bring fresh perspectives to your institutional needs. Academic Search's consultants are practiced in seeking nominations and applications from leaders in government, nonprofit organizations, and business whose skills might effectively transfer to a role at the University. By holding to high ethical standards in expanding areas of outreach, Academic Search can find candidates with significant relevant experience, even though their paths to the position differ from conventional routes. We maintain membership in the Association of Executive Search and Leadership Consultants (AESC), giving us use of AESC's BlueSteps database and access to thousands of professionals that may fit your search.

## **COMMITMENT TO CONFIDENTIALITY**

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Confidentiality is paramount in every search both to protect candidates and to allow the work of the search committee to be honest and thorough as it executes its critical responsibilities. We can advise your search chair and provide information on best practices for maintaining confidentiality before, during, and after the search, including ensuring the security of all records in compliance with institutional, state, and EEOC guidelines.

## **NON-SOLICITATION PLEDGE**

An important added value is our pledge to uphold and exceed the recruitment industry standard for non-solicitation.

We will not directly solicit any employee of any institution for which we are currently performing a search. After the search concludes, we will extend that non-solicitation pledge for a period of one year.

If a member of the campus community receives a direct solicitation from Academic Search during a non-solicitation period, it should be immediately reported to our chief operating officer, and appropriate follow-up action will be taken.

If members of a campus community approach us during a non-solicitation period through application or nomination, we are ethically bound to respond to them and treat them equally in the search process.

The president or chancellor of a partner institution may waive this non-solicitation pledge as to specific employees by communicating that waiver to Academic Search.

# REFERENCES

## MISSISSIPPI INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING

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Dr. Alfred Rankins  
Commissioner of Higher Education  
601-432-6418  
arankins@ihl.state.ms.us

*Dr. Rankins served as the search liaison with the Board of Trustees for three Presidential searches (Jackson State University, Delta State University, and the University of Southern Mississippi).*

## THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

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Dr. James Hallmark  
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs  
806-433-6121  
jhallmark@tamus.edu

*Dr. Hallmark served as the Search Liaison with the Chancellor and the Board of Regents for the President's search for Texas A&M University-Texarkana.*

## GREENFIELD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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One College Drive  
Greenfield, MA

Shannon Lorange  
Assistant to the President, Liaison to the Board of Trustees  
413-775-1410  
lorange@gcc.mass.edu

*Ms. Lorange served as the primary contact for the search for their new President.*



# PROPOSED INVESTMENT

Academic Search proposes to facilitate a comprehensive nationwide search for the new President for Fitchburg State University in consideration of a professional fee of \$77,500, which reflects a discount we provide to member institutions of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. Unlike fee models based on a percentage of the first-year salary of the person placed, this fixed fee provides you with budget certainty going into the process and removes any perceived conflict of interest on behalf of Academic Search.

Our professional fee includes all expenses associated with the work Academic Search undertakes on your behalf, other than discretionary costs for candidate travel, consultant travel, advertising, and background investigations. The framework for these expenses is reviewed and approved by Fitchburg State, and Academic Search can propose cost-saving measures. No additional administrative fees are imposed.

The projected advertising budget (right) includes online-only advertisements, which will attract a significant and robust pool of candidates. Academic Search's consultants will be glad to work with you in determining whether print advertising is necessary and beneficial. Academic Search's consultants recruit many top candidates through direct outreach, which is included in the professional fee.

Investigations conducted will be determined by the needs and requirements of the institution but may include credit and driving history, history of criminal and civil litigation, degree verifications and other enquiries and other research as required. The firm obtains signed permission from candidates prior to performing investigations and provides results to the institution on a confidential basis.

The estimate for reimbursable expenses shown in the table on this page does not specify costs for any candidate travel and accommodations related to in-person interviews since this cost could vary widely depending on the number of candidates selected and the location of each candidate. Academic Search will advise candidates in coordinating their travel arrangements pursuant to the policies of the institution, and, if desired, assemble candidate receipts and information for reimbursement by Fitchburg State University.

## PROPOSED INVESTMENT TOTAL

Professional Fee	\$77,500
Consultant Travel	\$5,500*
Advertising	\$3,000
Due Diligence	\$2,975

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**Estimated Total**     **\$88,975**

\*Actual travel only.  
Remote participation is included in the professional fee.

# INTEGRATED SERVICES

Academic Search offers the following services in addition to our comprehensive search process. To learn more about our Integrated Services and the additional investment, you may contact Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Dr. Shawn Hartman.



## TRANSITION & ONBOARDING



## EXECUTIVE COACHING

### TRANSITION AND ONBOARDING

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Because a leadership change is a critical time for boards, the campus community, senior leadership teams, and the departing and newly appointed leaders, Academic Search is eager to assist you with a clear transition strategy. The success of your next leader may well depend on a smooth transition and partnering with Academic Search can be an investment in both the leader and the institution.

Put simply, the goal for the unique transitional period is to help institutional and organizational leaders work effectively toward the smooth handoff of the baton from one leader to the next, to support a gracious and celebratory exit of the outgoing leader, and to prepare the campus community for the entrance and long-term success of a new leader.

### EXECUTIVE COACHING

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In the best of times, effective leadership depends on having heart, courage, and wisdom. Competence is required, but competence alone is not enough. The adaptive realities of today make college and university leadership more challenging, more vexing, and more uncertain. What a leader has done in the past does not guarantee present or future success. The most successful and effective leaders know how to ask for and receive help. They know that their growth, capacity, sustainability, and well-being are ongoing endeavors.

Academic Search's commitment to identifying and securing talented leaders for colleges and universities goes far beyond executive search. Strong, thriving, and sustainable institutions necessarily depend on strong, adaptive, and sustainable leaders. The corporate sector realized long ago that one of the most valuable investments it can make in its key leaders is executive coaching. Through our distinctive Executive Coaching Practice solely for higher education leaders, we dedicate ourselves to the ongoing development, effectiveness, sustainability, and well-being of new and incumbent leaders.

# STRENGTHENING HIGHER EDUCATION

In selecting Academic Search, you are connecting the work of your institution with our ongoing commitments to developing the next generations of leaders. Our consultants are regularly engaged—often doing *pro-bono* work—with distinguished organizations and leadership institutes, such as the Higher Education Resource Services (HERS), the American Council on Education (ACE), and our non-profit parent organization, the American Academic Leadership Institute (AALI). Through our connections, you become part of this work, as we rely on these networks and knowledge of emerging practices to help you find a diverse pool of highly qualified candidates. You also benefit from Academic Search’s role in sponsoring or facilitating programs from these higher education associations in recent years:

- Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP)
- American Association of Community Colleges (AACCC)
- American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education (AAHHE)
- American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU)
- Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (ACCU)
- Association of Presbyterian Colleges and Universities (APCU)
- Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities (CUMU)
- College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA-HR)
- Council of Independent Colleges (CIC)
- National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education (NADOHE)
- National Association of Educational Procurement (NAEP)
- National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU)
- National Association of Presidential Assistants in Higher Education (NAPAHE)
- National Forum on Higher Education for the Public Good
- North American Association of Methodist Schools, Colleges and Universities (NAAMSCU)
- Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)
- Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE)

## CULTIVATING THE NEXT GENERATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION LEADERSHIP

Academic Search is able to tap a diversity of emerging talent via the leadership development programs offered through the American Academic Leadership Institute (AALI). Supported solely by Academic Search, AALI is identifying, cultivating, and empowering the next generation of higher education leadership, and in doing so, is building the foundation for the future of colleges and universities nationwide. Our senior consultants volunteer their time and expertise to help AALI’s program participants prepare for the executive search process. This speaks to Academic Search’s mission and broadens our consultants’ connections to prospective candidates and other established campus leaders who are well positioned to help identify potential candidates from their own professional networks.



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